

THE ETERNAL STRUGGLE



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M. H. KNADJIAN

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The Eternal Struggle

A WORD PICTURE OF
ARMENIA'S FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

BY

H. M. Knadjian

The brave men, living and dead, who STRUGGLED here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract.

Abraham Lincoln

Dedication



THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED
TO
MR. K. ARAKELIAN
FOR HIS GENEROUS
CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS
PUBLICATION

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Introduction

There is a tendency in some quarters to lay the blame of the Turkish atrocities on the Armenians, upon the head of the Armenian Revolutionaries. It is said that agitators stirred up the populace against the authorities arbitrarily and for selfish reasons. They disturbed the amicable relationship between the Armenians and Turks and are responsible for the bloodshed. This theory is advanced either by those who are ignorant of the recent Armenian history, or by others who maliciously misrepresent the facts to exonerate the Government. There is not a shadow of doubt that discontent existed long before any revolutionary activity was initiated. The whole nation was groaning under the Moslem oppression. . . .

"Hark! forth from the abyss a voice proceeds

A long low distant murmur of dread sound,

Such as arises when a nation bleeds

With some deep and immedicable wound."

The Armenian insurrectionary movement started, according to Michael Varantian, towards the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th centuries, initiated by the aristocracy and assisted by the clergy. In 1678 a convention was called in Echmiadzin, by Hagop Catholicos, to consider the persecution of the Christians in Persia and try to find a way to redress it. After long deliberation it was decided to send a delegation to Europe to plead for the help of the Christian sovereigns. It consisted of six members, three laymen and three clergymen, under the leadership of the Catholicos himself. Among them was a man by the name of Israel Ory, who claimed to be a descendant of one of the princes of Armenia. On their way to Europe the Catholicos died and the delegation was broken up. Ory, however, continued the journey and for twenty years traveled from country to country, stirring up interest in the Armenian question. During his itinerary he interviewed the Pope, Louis the fourteenth of France, one of the princes of Germany, and Peter the Great, the Czar of Russia. Some of them promised help. But the time was not propitious. There were rumors of war in Europe and each sovereign was occupied with his own internal worries. Disappointed and heart broken, Israel Ory died in 1711 and was buried in Astrakhan, Russia.

Then followed Tavit Bey (David Bey), who at first, at

the head of a large army, prepared to assist the Russians against the Persians. But when the Russians retreated without accomplishing their purpose, Tavit Bey continued alone fighting the enemy. Four years he struggled hard until he captured his native province and established an independent principality. Unfortunately, his life was cut short and once more the Armenian population of the district went under the yoke of their persecutors.

The Mohammedan rule was especially irritating to our higher clergy. A number of them openly encouraged the rebellious spirit of men at arms. Archbishop Nerses of Ashtarak was the soul of the uprising of 1826-1828. He personally presided over the enlistment of volunteers and helped to draw up a plan of campaign. He sent circular letters all over the country, stimulating the benumbed patriotism of his flock. "Remember," he said, "the glorious achievements of your forefathers. You are their descendants, the same blood runs in your veins. How they fought for God and the Church and for the Homeland. How they sacrificed their lives for freedom. The time has come to show that we are worthy to bear the name of our ancestors. Be brave. Fear not. Let us all unite and together possess the land bequeathed to us by them. Do not spare the last drop of your blood if need be. May the grace of God crown your efforts with success." And he, the Archbishop himself, holding in one hand the cross, and the flag in the other, rushed into the battlefield.

It would be a long story to tell all the vicissitudes of the war which followed. Enthusiasm was general. Victory was assured. Once more the major part of Armenia was released from slavery. But, as in former times, it was a short lived independence. Russia played false. Malicious and slanderous reports against the Archbishop arrived at the Imperial headquarters and he was banished from his native land to spend the rest of his life in obscurity.

The condition of that part of the country which was under the Turkish domination was no better. Atrocities of all kinds were perpetrated upon the Christians by their Moslem neighbors with impunity. The archives of the Patriarchate in Constantinople are piled high with the petitions of the sufferers asking for redress. It is possible to doubt the heart-rending descriptions of the ill-treatment endured by the Armenians as being exaggerated. Therefore, I will leave them

in their resting place undisturbed. No one, however, can distrust the veracity of those disinterested Europeans, who as agents of their governments, lived in the country and were eye witnesses of what was going on.

The Duke of Argyll, gathering the official testimonies of some of the foreign residents, summarizes them in these words, in his voluminous book on the Eastern Question: "So far as government is concerned, Asiatic Turkey is simply chaos. The account given of it by Sir Fenwick Williams in 1854 has been repeated by every competent authority over and over again, during the four and twenty years which have since elapsed. Official corruption and Turkish barbarism in every form of development have been reducing some of the fairest regions of the earth, and the seat of an ancient civilization to a state of growing desolation."

Sir Fenwick Williams was a British general, who brilliantly defended Kars against the Russians for six months in 1855. During his residence at Erzeroom he had favorable opportunity of becoming acquainted with the condition of the country. In his report, among other abuses, he lays stress on the depredations of the Turkish Tax-Gatherers. No language can portray the infamy which characterized the life and conduct of this body of men. They were solely responsible to the governor, who appointed and dismissed them according to their desserts, which depended upon their aptitude at robbery and oppression.

In Europe and America the police is the servant of the public. He is there to help those who need assistance, to protect the citizens against criminals, to defend the weak against the aggressors. In Turkey, the zaptiahs were the dread of the people, especially the Christian people. They ill treated the inoffensive. It was best to avoid them. Bribery was rampant. Do I exaggerate? Here is the testimony of one who claims to have had a personal knowledge of Turkey, having lived there for many years as British consul. Mr. Holmes says: "The Turkish policy is, with much justice, a subject of grievance. A great many of the men are notoriously bad characters, who generally have to bribe the colonel and binbashi for admittance to the force and reimburse themselves by extorting money almost wherever and whenever employed."

As regards the Turkish officials in the provinces, the condition was deplorable. Ignorance and arbitrariness could be

detected in all their activities. Fanaticism and cruelty typified their administration. Bribery and extortion were the only incentives to action. Many authenticated facts could be cited to show the state of affairs in some parts of the Sultan's dominions. . . . One example will suffice. The new Vali, Ismail Pasha, who had the appropriate nickname of Gourt (wolf) Pasha, of the province of Diarbekir, soon after he put the administrative machinery in working order, exerted himself vigorously to recover at least part of the large sum which he had spent to procure the appointment. He extorted some 40,000 liras by fair means or foul. The wealthy Armenian merchants were especially his field of operation. It is reported by a British Consul, that he sent his minions to a man of property to collect an imaginary debt. When they found he was not at home, they dragged his wife out of her hiding place and stripped her of all the gold ornaments. She was so roughly handled that she was confined to bed for weeks.

Ambassador Sir Henry Bulwar (1857-1865) in corresponding with his Government expresses himself on this subject in these historic words: "We cannot conceal from ourselves what is at the bottom of this irremediable rottenness of the whole Turkish Government. Without recourse to Europeans, an administration upon a satisfactory basis can never be organized here. Without recourse to a new race, energy can never be infused into affairs."

The Armenians have been molested by the Kurdish race from time immemorial; but it became a terrible menace in 1890, when the "Hamediah Regiment" came into existence. It was organized by the authorities with the sole purpose of preying on the Christian farmers, who had lately dared to complain of the depredations of this lawless body of men. A wise government would have patiently listened to the account of grievances and ameliorated the condition for the sake of the revenue, which the treasury derived, if for no other reason. Instead, the state of affairs was rendered worse by arming the aggressors and giving them a military standing. After this, the Christian villagers refrained from making complaints; for, complaining not only did no good, but brought greater calamities upon their heads.

Mr. Taylor, the British Consul, in his report (March 19, 1860), relates the following occurrence as an example of the condition in general; "On my way I stopped at the miserable

village of Pirran on the Boolanik Lake, containing only fourteen houses, or rather, hovels, although a few years back it had a population of 500 souls, owning amongst them more than 1000 head of horned cattle. Now, I had the greatest difficulty in obtaining the necessary milk for tea.

"The evening before, a Kurd in the service of Boolanik Kaimakam, a notorious character, only lately released from prison, aided by six other miscreants of his tribe, the Hassanalee, had broken into the house of the village priest, and after beating him and his son so as to leave them half dead, abducted the young bride of the latter. She was recovered some ten days after, and delivered up to her friends, in a most pitiable state."

Mr. Taylor concludes that in this way great crimes were committed unpunished; grievous outrages perpetrated unredressed.

It is not possible to fully describe the conflict that could exist between Christians and Moslems when they have to live together in the same land, especially if the latter is the absolute reigning party. In its essence, Islamism is intolerant and exclusive. Its votaries are arrogant, domineering, overbearing. It was propagated by the sword and would be carried on by the same means. It is unbelievable but true that the Koran commands its followers: "And when you meet those who misbelieve, then strike off heads until you have massacred them and bind fast the bonds." Christians are infidel dogs, blasphemers, gaours. They are considered unclean, to be avoided from contact, despised. Their evidence against the faithful could not be tolerated. The only condition to live is abject submission to Moslem rule. With this notion of superiority inculcated from childhood, the Turk has been insufferable and unfit for good fellowship.

Another and perhaps the greatest cause of friction between the Turks and the Armenians was the difference in outlook towards education. Among the latter, the desire for learning was keen. Western ideas were spreading rapidly. Taking advantage of the easy means of communication with Europe and America, the youth of the Nation came into contact with peoples of modern notions, of politics, science and religion. Colleges were established in strategic points in Turkey: Constantinople, Marsovan, Harpoot, Aintab, by the American Missionaries, by which the Armenian young men and young

women were benefited mostly. These institutions in the course of time spread their influence upon the whole educational system. They helped to adopt new methods of teaching, raise the scholastic standard and kindle a deep yearning for erudition. Pedagogic societies were organized and within a comparatively short time in every town and larger village, schools came into existence for both boys and girls on latest European principles.

This ill-treatment had been endured too long by the Armenians. From the beginning of the Turkish domination of the land, the state of affairs had gone from bad to worse. All efforts by the friends of the administration for improvement had been of no avail. Even after losing some portions of the empire, the Sultan's government still persisted in its senseless policy of oppression and reign of terror. At last the awakening of the people from the slumber of many years took place. It began at the highest headquarters and spread to the rank and file of the Nation.

The charge is often brought by Turkish officials and others that the discontent was fomented by Russian agitators in the employ of the Czar's government. This has no foundation in fact. It was true that the condition of the Armenians living on the other side of the border being much better in every way, made the lot unbearable for those who were suffering under the Turkish yoke; but to say that the Russian government employed secret agents to stir up the people, is untrue. It was intended to divert the attention of Europe from the intolerable servitude to which Christians were subjected. Had the Porte taken efficient measures to insure severe and impartial justice, reform the method of taxation, establish equality between Moslem and Christian, it would have removed existing disaffection and promoted loyalty.

Again the Armenians were denounced as a rebellious nation, desiring to institute an independent state in the Turkish empire. This false accusation was brought against them to justify the harsh treatment that the government undertook to mete out to them at every complaint. The responsible leaders of the people never at any time demanded an impossible autonomy. They were satisfied to remain subjects of the Sultan, under a just and an equitable administration; to be governed with moderation and peace: to have security of life and property and protection against their lawless neighboring tribes-

men. Could there be a more elementary request that a subject nation would make to their rulers. This was exactly what the ambassadors in Constantinople frequently represented to the Turkish government. The Duke of Argyll says: "All that they asked was an engagement on the part of Turkey that she would afford to her people some tolerable government—some administrative system, recognizing the fundamental principles of civilization and extending to all classes of her subjects some security for life, religion, property and honor. And even this obligation it was the aim of the European Powers to impose on Turkey in the form least obnoxious to the pride and least offensive to the dignity of the Porte."

Meanwhile a group of writers in verse and prose, spread patriotic enthusiasm among the Armenian reading public. Father Alishan, Nalbandian, Raffi, Badganian, Surwantian, Portuguese, Demirjibashian, Beshiktashian, Ardzrooni and many others, through their writings, stirred up the slumbering love of country and inspired hope for freedom. Books, magazines and weekly papers were published. Lecture halls and auditoriums sprang up in many places and able speakers enlightened the people on world affairs. Even in churches, some more spirited preachers besprinkled their sermons with sentiments of patriotism.

The question was squarely put before the Nation; should these wrongs be patiently endured forever, or something done to improve the condition? It was not human to put up with such oppression without complaint. There is a limit to endurance. Some, for reasons of their own, kept silent, others, with altruistic sentiments, raised their voices in protest.

The honor and responsibility of fearless and formal endeavor to bring to the attention of authorities the sufferings of the Armenians, fairly belongs to one individual. In the highlands of Armenia in the monastery of Varak, there lived a dignitary of the church, by the name of Mugurdich Khrimian, a man of splendid character, known by the sobriquet, "The Eagle of Vaspurakan." He assembled a class of young men in the academy, of which he was the head, and instilled their susceptible minds with the rudiments of knowledge, the sentiments of patriotism. With his newly acquired printing press, he published a newspaper, in which were described not only the intolerable condition of the Armenian farmers, but also

the criminal indifference of the local officials towards these sufferings.

His fame spread abroad all over the country. He was popularly known as Khrimian Hairik. When a vacancy occurred in the patriarchate in Constantinople in 1869, he was elected to occupy the chair of the patriarch. The populace in the capital received him with open arms. In his first speech from the chair of his high office, he declared: "I dedicate myself to serve my Nation. You have to promise the same with me. The Armenians everywhere are expecting from us the rendering of their condition less heavy. I have promised to them. We must work hard. You must enter into a mutual obligation with me towards this end. Do not look upon me merely as the patriarch of Constantinople, I am the personification of the sorrows of Armenia. I do not know by what means my predecessors intermediated with the Government to find a remedy for these afflictions: but my mediation is going to be efficacious."

This speech created a deep impression. The members of the Council were divided into two groups, ultra conservatives and liberals. The former, composed mostly of men of substance, counseling moderation; the latter urging more stringent representation with the Government, as they said, all the legitimate and modest petitions in the past have been ignored.

A committee was elected to prepare a report. Khrimian urged that the application should include a demand of appointing Christian officials along with the Moslem authorities, in the administration of the provinces. When the Kurdish chiefs realize that the Armenians also are admitted to high office and have power to punish their misdeeds, they will stop molesting us. Why should our people as subjects of the Sultan participate in all the obligations and be deprived of the privilege of protection?

The committee prepared a long report, which was discussed in the Council for many months. After sundry alterations and mutilations, it was presented to the Sublime Port. Its style was dignified, but not offensive; submissive, but not servile. The Port received it favorably and responded to it by appointing a mixed Commission to investigate. Hopes were raised; everybody was elated. Even a superficial inquiry established all the allegations of the Report and fully proved the corruptions complained of. A long document was drawn up and sent to the Palace for Sultan's signature. It never saw

the light of day again. It rested comfortably with other such communications forever. Consequently no step was taken to check the crimes and the situation in the interior became worse with every passing year.

To renew the protestations was out of the question. There were those at that time, as there have been in every age, who opposed any kind of complaint against the Government. Obsequiously compliant to all sorts of indignities, they were satisfied with the status quo as long as they could make money and get rich. Such men cannot see beyond their nose and are insensible to the sufferings of others. Everything is measured in dollars and cents.

A persecution started against the instigator of this movement. Malicious invectives were thrown at the face of this holy man of God. Even today, after so many years, there are critics, who, ignorantly or otherwise, lay the whole blame of the atrocities and massacres on his white, sacred head, because he dared raise his voice against the domination and the insufferable barbarities of an uncivilized government.

Khrimian Hairik, after four years of hard struggle, like the great apostles, being in perils from his own countrymen, in perils from the Turks, in labor and travail, despaired of accomplishing his purpose, and was compelled to resign. Pathetic are his last words: "Allow me to vacate this chair," he said in his resignation, "I could accomplish nothing as a patriarch; let me work as a simple Khrimian Vartabed. Say 'Fare you well, Eagle of Vaspoorakan, go find your beloved Varak and rest there.' Yes, give me back my peaceful chamber and my pen: a little tanabour will suffice. Behold the storm-tossed ship hastens towards haven."

In his successor, Nerses Varjabedian, elected patriarch in 1874, we find another man of vigorous and courageous character. He had been with Khrimian throughout all his activity. He was aware of the attitude taken by the Government against the numerous complaints lodged with them. He tried another line of action. About this time "The Ottoman Constitution" was proclaimed, which promised reforms in all parts of the Empire. Here was a good chance. To strengthen the hands of the reformers, he adopted a policy of praising and complimenting them. Instead of condemning the higher officials for the depredations committed in the provinces, he exonerated them, saying these crimes were perpetrated against the will

of the Central Government. He went so far as to publish an Edict addressed to the Armenian people, in which he strongly vindicated the rulers of the country, lavishly praised their good administration and attributed our national existence to their beneficial rule. Patriarch Varjabedian was decorated by the Sultan.

This change of front was supposed to break the antagonism and alleviate the oppression. By flattering declarations, it was hoped to gain favorable attention. Did it work? It is a well known historical fact that the whole scheme of reforms proposed at that time was a fiasco. It was conceived and set on foot as a screen to blind the eyes of Europe. It was soon found that, instead of improving the condition of the Christian people, the state of affairs moved from bad to worse. The very man who had been mostly responsible for this change of policy, Hamazasp Ballarian, a genuine turcophile, once more stood up in the Council Chamber and spoke, but this time in a different tone. He had gone out recently touring through the country and had seen with his own eyes the extortions practiced by the Kurds upon the Armenians. He related how the chiefs of the Kurdish tribes subject the Christian farmers to all kinds of outrages with impunity, very often in conjunction with the Valis and Mutasarifs. "When I asked a Vali why these culprits were not kept under control, for which he had sufficient number of troops, instead of being licensed to plunder and pillage, he answered that it was the Secret of the Government. I did not at first understand the meaning of this assertion; but afterwards, a friendly official explained to me that the Kurds were permitted to harass the Armenians by incessant attacks, in order to hold them down and allow them no chance to rebel."

This has been the policy of the Turkish administration from the beginning—Instead of alleviating the oppression, to intensify it, in order to stop complaining. This is the policy of all tyrants all over the world. It has always ended in disaster.

These were critical times for Turkey. The armies of the Czar were knocking at the gates of Constantinople. The Russian Commander-in-Chief had encamped at San Stefano and was dictating the terms of peace. The Sultan was ready to accept any kind of humiliating terms, if he could only keep the hereditary enemy out of the Capital.

It was under these circumstances that the Armenian leaders took a decisive step, which had a far reaching effect upon the future of the nation. The temptation was great. The victorious Moscovite, the defender of the suffering Christians in the Turkish Empire, had arrived in the vicinity. He would, no doubt, enter Constantinople, possess the long coveted straits and extend his protecting arms all over the country. In a way, it was a good policy to offer welcome to the conqueror. Besides, they were desperate. They had employed every legitimate means to relieve the people from their oppressors, with no result. They must do something. A godsend savior was standing at the door. Who would not invite him in?

Patriarch Varjabedian, therefore, in obedience to the general feeling and with the consent of the Armenian National Council, sent a delegation to the Russian Headquarters, to ask Prince Nicholas to take the Armenian question into consideration in the peace negotiations. This appeal was not overlooked. Article 16th was inserted in the Treaty of San Stefano.

But the Russians did not advance farther. Under the pressure of the Concert of Europe, led by Great Britain, they retreated. Later in the same year (1878), the Congress of Berlin was convened to reconsider the Treaty of San Stefano. Here again Varjabedian had his representatives to plead the cause of Armenia. But the delegates of the Great Powers would not even listen to them. The only thing they did was to change the 16th article into the 61st article of the Berlin Treaty, which instead of improving the former, made it less effective. Taking away the duty of supervising on the reforms in Turkey from one Power, it laid it on six Powers. The responsibility was divided. Everybody's business, it was nobody's business.

Deep disappointment prevailed on all sides. The situation became in a marked degree more serious. It seemed as if we had added treason on our rebellious discontent by appealing to foreigners for help. The Government viewed our conduct in this light. The Grand Vizier openly declared that the Armenians, instead of assisting the State in times of peril, went over to the enemy and tried to betray their sovereign. What has Europe to do with our internal affairs?

Underlying these remarks a definite threat could be detected. I am fully convinced that the embryo of the plan for wholesale destruction of the Armenians formed itself at this time in the minds of Abdul Hamid and his advisors. Later

events of a bloody nature in Alashkert, Erzeroum and Constantinople, conclusively demonstrated this fact, where, according, to one investigator, "there was not a semblance of revolt; the inhabitants were perfectly peaceable, and the attack on them was as cruel and wanton a deed as could well have been committed."

The answer of the Turkish Government to the 61st article of the Berlin Treaty was to increase the pressure on the Armenians. Censorship of the press became more rigorous. The entrance of foreign journals and magazines into the country was prohibited; even the text books in English and French languages were turned down. An army of spies, in the Capital and in the larger cities of the Provinces, kept the authorities posted with what was going on; one could not speak his mind in a public place for fear a spy might be listening. The higher schools and colleges especially were under the ban; the instructors were molested; the students arrested and imprisoned. Even the churches were not free from suspicion; doubtful words and sentences of the preacher were reported; sometimes religious expressions were grotesquely distorted, giving them treasonable meaning. Leaving the country for foreign ports was forbidden; traveling in the interior became a tortuous affair; at every police station, your passport was examined, your pockets were searched, any papers and letters that you possessed were confiscated, and not infrequently, your purse was abstracted. Protest was worse than useless. It endangered your life. Highway robbery, holdups, raids, cattle stealing, plunder, rapine, kidnapping and abduction of women continued unrestricted, with a vengeance.

After the failure of the work of both the patriarchs — Khrimian and Varjabedian — a withering criticism started against them and their activities. They were held responsible for the deplorable happenings. They were blamed for the non-fulfillment of their expectations. They were denounced as incompetent, unfitted to manage the affairs of the Nation. A good chance was created for the turcophile element to censure them as the cause of all of these sufferings. We were well off and comfortable until these disturbers of the peace came to power. Some of them went so far as to charge Patriarch Varjabedian of acts of treachery, just as the Vizier had done before them, calling him a traitor.

Nerses Varjabedian a traitor! A man of rare patriotic

spirit to be accused of treason! A Turk may be excused for calling him a traitor; but for an Armenian to see in his activity any thing but the outcome of a consuming love for his people, is to sink to the lowest depth of infamy. Varjabedian was a man of iron character. Did he not withstand Abdul Hamid, when the latter ordered him to call back his representatives from Berlin? "I would rather be hanged over the gate of the Patriarchate than recall the Armenian delegation from the Berlin Conference," he answered.

However, the situation was tragic. His position was untenable. There was only one way left open for him to follow. Disappointed, heartbroken, he stood up and tendered his resignation with these historic words; "Answer me, you deputies of the people, is it not the cause of the Nation that I presented to the attention of the Powers? Speak! Would you have forgiven me, if your Patriarch had remained unconcerned, at a time like this, when the fate of the Christian peoples of the Turkish Empire was under consideration to be settled? Tell me, would the spirits of our forefathers—from Haig to our last King, Levon; from Gregory the Illuminator to the last Nerses—have pardoned me, if I had not, in spite of every obstacle, caused the cry of the Nation to reach as far as Europe? I demand your formal vote of confidence. Answer me with your unanimous voice. This is a case in which the voice of the Council must be unanimous."

After enumerating the benefits to the Nation from making the Armenian question an international affair, he goes on to exhort the deputies to carry on the work thus begun. "Such a work cannot be accomplished in one day, nor by the agency of one man. Let us unite our efforts and be prepared for the future."

Poor Varjabedian! He could not get a unanimous vote. How could he, with so many ultra conservative members? Still he was genuinely optimistic. He could not foresee that he was dealing with a barbarous enemy and Machiavelian friends.

After him, a conservative churchman occupied the patriarchal chair. Hamid told him plainly that the Armenians would not see the day of freedom until the religion of Islam was destroyed in the country.

It was under these circumstances that a movement was discernible among the younger generation. The revolutionary ideas were gaining ground rapidly. In various localities tenta-

tive attempts were made to organize, but nothing definite came out of them. A serious effort was made in 1886, in London, to form a secret society; this also proved a failure. The ground was not yet ready. It paved the way, however, two years later, in 1888, to organize the Hunchakian Party.

It was bound to come. There was no other door left open. Every peaceable means had been used without success. As faithful subjects, we had appealed to our rulers for redress. Again and again, our petitions had been laid aside. Nothing unreasonable was requested — just elementary justice. And yet, our suit was ignored; our entreaties fell on deaf ears. Driven to despair, we applied, when the occasion presented itself, to the Christian Powers for succor. Here, also, we were turned down. Instead of assisting us, they callously bargained over our sufferings for more concessions from the Sultan. What else was there for us to do? Could the wiseacre critics of the revolution answer? Of course, there are those who would be willing to submit to all kinds of indignities for the sake of a few liras; but who could guarantee that all will think in the same way? The youth of the nation, especially those who had come into contact with European civilization, found the regime intolerable. They flocked around the new idea. Duke of Argyll says: "When those Public Societies, which are called Governments, fail in their duty, and abdicate their proper functions, that Secret Societies find their opportunities of action."

Two years later, in 1890, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation came into existence. Suspecting from various signs what was in store for us, these two organizations undertook to prepare the people for self defense. Their foresight was justified. The fiendish plan of Abdul Hamid began to unfold itself, namely, to solve the Armenian question by annihilating the Armenian Nation. The heroisms exhibited in repelling the onslaughts of the Turkish hordes by the Revolutionists in some localities are the bright beacons in our history of those dark and dismal years, between 1894 and 1915.

"It is enough in sooth that once we bore
These fardels of the heart—the heart whose sweat was gore."

Preface

This book is not an autobiography, although the story is told in the first person. It does not claim to be a work of art or literature: it is testimony of a great tragedy.

My experiences — imprisonment and deportation with their attendant perils — are real. Nothing is exaggerated. Some parts may sound sensational, but sensationalism was not my intention. The cruelties and outrages committed against defenseless victims may seem unbelievable, but they are true. The heroism and selfsacrifice manifested by some of the defenders can be classed with the greatest and most sublime achievements of history. Facts are often stranger than fiction. The hero and the heroine are fictitious. Dikran Aryan represents many devoted leaders of the revolution who lived during the period between 1895-1915. Arusag Ananian is the incarnation of the loyalty and faithfulness of her sex, manifested under most trying circumstances; she is the personification of Armenian women, who willingly sacrificed their lives to keep their honor unsullied.

Encounters between the Turks and the revolutionaries, similar to those related in this book, actually occurred at different times and in different places.

The names of the towns and villages are not changed. The massacres of 1895-6 in Armenia; and those of 1906 in Cilicia, are undeniable historical facts, authenticated by official reports of various consuls to their respective governments.

The deportation of the Armenian population to the deserts of southern Turkey under the pretext of military necessity, during World War I, is well known in Europe and America. Many are the witnesses who have on record the utmost sufferings of helpless women and children.

The resistance of the Armenians of Ourfa against deportation and the consequent struggle against overwhelming numbers and eventual annihilation are recorded in the annals of the Turkish government.

M. H. K.

CHAPTER ONE

ARRIVAL IN CONSTANTINOPLE

*Through me the way is to the city dolent;
Through me the way is to eternal dole;
Through me the way among the people lost.
All hope abandon, ye who enter in!*

DANTE

It was the autumn of 1894.

A motley crowd had gathered in the station square — Turks, Greeks, Armenians, Jews, Circassians, Bulgarians and others — when I arrived in Constantinople from Paris by the Orient Express. Officers and aides, surrounded by soldiers, were expecting a passenger. It was rumored that a prince of the Imperial House of Austria was coming to visit his majesty, Sultan Abdul Hamid. After the customary ceremonies of welcome, the cavalcade, led by the military band, started towards the Yildiz palace.

Until that moment the other passengers were not allowed to alight. When the time came to leave the station the police at the entrance began to examine the passports of those who were coming from Europe. Taking my handbag, I presented myself, with others, before the officer without having any sense of danger. When he found out that I was an Armenian and was coming from England, he told me to wait.

One by one the passengers left the station and I was left alone. One of the policemen approached me and taking the satchel from my hand told me to follow him.

At the police headquarters I was invited to sit down. Later I was led to the chief of police. My name, occupation and birth place were recorded. When I was asked why I went to England, what I was doing there and with whom I had associated, I answered without hesitation. I was sent back to the same room to wait. Hours passed. The time was getting late, and yet permission to leave was not granted me. Calling one of the officers, I inquired the reason for this delay. The man was astonished at my incredulity. With a faint smile he said, "My friend, do you not know that those who enter a Turkish bath will not come out without sweating?" I did not understand what he meant. The saying was an enigma to me.

When all the offices in the building were deserted and darkness began to fall, the same officer came to me and politely said: "The time is late; the Pasha desires that you stay with

us tonight as our guest." He led me to a large hall and, opening the door, ordered me to enter. The place was dimly lighted. At first I could see nobody, but when my eyes got used to the darkness, I was able to discern about a score of men scattered all over the big room.

There were among them Armenians and Turks. I was careful not to associate with any of them, not from pride, but for fear of compromising myself. A young man, however, attracted my attention. He was well-dressed, and had clean cut features and a superior bearing. He did not look like an ordinary prisoner. Encouraged by my attention he approached and desired to make my acquaintance. After giving our names to each other, we began to converse. When he learned that I was coming from England, he told me that he had been in England also and that he had studied architecture in the United States. Thinking that he could use his profession in this country and that he could make a living among his own countrymen, he came to Turkey and, like myself, was arrested and detained in this place. He had signed an application for a position in the public works department of the government and expects to get out within a short time.

The name of my fellow prisoner was Dikran Aryan. A man of high education, he spoke English and French fluently. His manners were gentlemanly, his speech cultivated. He was tall and well-built, with broad, square shoulders and strong, muscular arms. His skin was fair, his hair dark and wavy and he had black fiery eyes. He was twenty-five years of age.

He was well-informed on political questions, but evidently spoke with reservation. He avoided talking about revolutionary matters, but one could see that he knew all about that recent movement. From the first a friendship was established between us which lasted to the end.

Gradually I became acquainted also with other Armenian prisoners. Some were arrested for minor offences. Some had quarreled and disturbed the peace. There was one, a teacher, whose only crime had been that one of his pupils had written a verse for exercises in which he had lauded national freedom.

Several days passed in this way. I was waiting for the police authorities to discover that I had done nothing that deserved punishment and release me. I had friends in Constantinople, but they did not know I had arrived and was in pris-

on. The American missionaries had invited me to take up the pastoral work in Scutari, but they had not been advised of my arrival. I wanted to send word to them, but how?

On the third day of my imprisonment, a policeman opened the door and called out, "Dikran effendi." Aryan stood up at once and answered, "Here." "You are wanted upstairs," said the policeman. Dikran took up his satchel and prepared to leave. When he shook hands with me and said goodby he added that his application had been accepted.

"How do you know?" I asked.

"Did you not hear what the policeman said? He called me effendi. They do not give that title to a prisoner."

I asked him to call at the American Bible House and to tell the missionaries and the Ascabed (the head of the protestant community) of my arrival and imprisonment. This he promised to do and went out. I heard afterwards that he was appointed as one of the architects on the construction of the new bridge.

On the following day I was called to the headquarters of the police department. There I saw an American gentleman, evidently a missionary, who greeted me in Turkish and offered me a seat. He was a stranger to me. He had a piece of paper in his hand and was trying to explain its contents to the chief of police. It was the notes for one of my English sermons, in which I had pointed out the attitude of Christ against war as one of the benefits that Christianity had brought to the world. This sentence had become a stumbling block to the Turkish censors. They had given it a revolutionary import. There were other words too, which they had twisted out of their original meaning.

The missionary could not convince the Chief that the sentence was harmless and I was ordered back to the prison. Before I left the room, I spoke to the missionary in English and told him that there is a letter of introduction for Judge Tarring in Constantinople which the Turkish authorities had confiscated with my other belongings. "Kindly let him know," I said.

As soon as Judge Tarring heard that there was a letter addressed to him at the police headquarters, he sent his dragoman and demanded it.

When I was called again to the Chief's office I knew that I was free because the title "effendi" was attached to my

name. There I saw an Englishman of imposing appearance who, turning to me, asked, "Are you Reverend Knadjian?" "I am," I answered. Then through his interpreter he explained to the functionaries present that I was recommended by influential persons in England and that there was no doubt whatsoever about my innocence. He peremptorily ordered my release.

"Pack ayee, Effendi," answered the Pasha. "Very well, Sir."

Judge Tarring took me in his carriage and left me at the Bible House. I was free.

I visited the American missionaries, who were glad to see that I was out of prison. They made arrangements for my new pastorate in the church in Scutari and assisted me in finding a place to stay. Specially Mr. W. W. Peet, the Treasurer of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, was kindness itself. He did everything possible to make my stay in Constantinople comfortable.

Before leaving the Bible House, I called on our Ascabed whom I knew personally. When he saw me, his first question was, "For what act of disloyalty were you imprisoned?"

I was astonished!

"For no act of disloyalty whatsoever," I answered.

"How could that be?" he insisted.

"I do not know," I said. "I am not aware of any violation of the law on my part."

He shook his head; he would not believe me. Without waiting for further elucidation, he began to lecture me on the duty of obeying the laws of the country.

"My dear sir," he continued, "you should not do this thing. It is not right. Every government has its shortcomings. Should the people rebel because of that? Especially we, Armenians, a subject nation, living with other nationalities under the rule of the Sultan, should be more careful. How can we expect to rise against the mighty Ottoman Empire? Moreover the pastors and priests, the religious leaders of the people, should not allow themselves to be involved with political affairs. It is beyond their sphere of activity. For a minister of the Gospel of peace to be found in acts of rebellion is unpardonable." He was trying to warn me against revolutionary activity of which I was not guilty. He was blaming me for acts which I had never committed or even thought of committing.

I listened to him patiently to the end, but I was stirred

deeply. After the recent treatment which I had received at the hands of the Turks, to be taken to task by our official head made my blood boil. I knew that he had dealings with the Turkish government and entertained friendly feelings towards the Turks, but to be so blinded by personal interests that he could not distinguish between the guilty and the innocent was intolerable. Throwing aside all caution, I said:

"Ascabed Effendi, you are talking to me as if I am a dangerous revolutionist. I do not understand what has caused you to suspect me. I never have taken part in revolutionary work. I have never had rebellious thoughts against the government. I went to England to study theology. I had neither time nor the disposition for national questions. Your accusations are absolutely groundless. I am not guilty. But I tell you this. My feelings have undergone a change since I entered Turkey. I came to this country with no revolutionary ideas. I can even declare that I was indifferent towards politics. The Turkish government is responsible for this change. If there are Armenians who are dissatisfied with the present system of government and are rebelling against oppression and tyranny, I give them credit and sympathize with them."

My stay in Constantinople, however, became irksome. At no time was I free from molestation. Detectives were watching my every move. Once every two weeks I had to report to the Police Headquarters. They would ask questions in the attempt to trap me. My letters were opened and the contents were noted. I was unhappy.

CHAPTER TWO IN MARSOVAN

*For when men lose the joys that sweeten life,
I cannot deem they live, but rather count
As if a breathing corpse. His heaped up stores
Of wealth are large, so be it, and he lives
With all a sovereign's state; and yet, if joy
Be absent, all the rest I count as nought,
And would not weigh them against pleasure's charm,
More than a vapor's shadow.*

SOPHOCLES

I was entertaining the idea of tendering my resignation and returning to England, when a man arrived from Marsovan on personal business. He came to see me and reported that, before he left, the Armenian Evangelical Church of that city held a congregational meeting and decided to call me to take up the pastoral work there, and had commissioned him to deliver this invitation personally.

I did not answer him immediately. I did not know whether or not to accept the call. Since I felt unsafe in the capital where I could elude arrest more easily, it would certainly be fraught with danger to live in one of the interior cities of the country. It seemed to me a case of "from the frying pan to the fire."

But Mr. H. Torikian was insistent. He tried hard to persuade me to accept the call. He described the work in glowing terms. It was a better field than the one I had here, he claimed — a wider sphere of usefulness. The people in Marsovan are more earnest and more enthusiastic. The church is much larger and well-organized. There are no factions in it. You would find many ready and willing to assist you in your work."

His words appealed to me. Besides, Anatolia College was in that city, and I would have a congenial group of teachers and professors with whom to associate. There were also several American families. After much deliberation and prayer I accepted the call. On the following Sunday I submitted my resignation and left Constantinople a short time later.

Marsovan was one of the cities in Asia Minor where the Armenian population is on a high level of education and refinement. Having the advantage of an easy access to the college, there were many graduates among the younger generation who had settled down and were doing business according

to modern methods. A number of well-to-do families were connected with the church and were supporting it liberally. The professors and the American missionaries were active in the community and were a great help in elevating the moral tone of the Christian population. From the first day I felt myself at home in such surroundings.

The relationship between the National Apostolical and the Armenian Evangelical churches was cordial. There was no prejudice or antagonism among the congregations. During the services on Sunday the church was crowded. Many, not being able to get inside, would stand at the windows and listen. It was a pleasure to preach to such an audience. There was eagerness, attentiveness, and enthusiasm in the faces before me. The atmosphere became electrified when the people walked in by the hundreds. They came, not as a matter of course or custom, but to hear, to learn, to benefit. Their responsiveness, their appreciation fired my tongue and made my heart rejoice. I preached as I had never preached before.

The revolutionary society in Marsovan was well established from the beginning. The two exiled professors, Tomayan and Kayayan, were pointed out as the founders of the movement. At the time of my arrival, the organization was showing great activity under the able leadership of a man by the name of Levon. There was an executive committee which directed its affairs efficiently. They showed friendliness towards me, but I was connected with them in no way.

The Kaimakam (Lieutenant governor) of the city, Mustapha Bey, was an enlightened Turkish official. He was a free thinker and a member of the Young Turk party. We saw each other very often. He would not consider it beneath his dignity to return my friendly calls. In my private room, we sometimes discussed various topics in an informal manner. He was interested in scientific and philosophical questions. He knew a little French and was trying to improve his mind by reading books in that language. Some of My Armenian friends did not put much confidence in him and warned me against too close an association, but I never found any cause to suspect his sincerity.

The Mutasarif (Governor) of Amasia, Bekir by name, on the contrary was a typical old school pasha. Circassian by nationality, he was an unlettered, conservative and despotic official. As the governor of the district, he had the higher

jurisdiction. He came to Marsovan often to acquaint himself with local affairs. On such occasions I had opportunity to see him and to know him. He was not lacking in Turkist civility, and apparently respected me, but somehow I could never trust him. His hostility to the revolutionary movement was undisguised and he threatened to deal severely with any person who dared to belong to the secret society.

But the Armenian revolutionaries were not afraid of his threats. They were carrying on the patriotic work and zealously propagating the principles of self-defense and preparing the people for future eventualities. In an underground room, in one of the side streets, the Executive Committee met at night, and gave direction to the activities. I was never present at any of these meetings, but I was aware of what was going on.

One day I received a visit from the head of the Committee. He was a young man of striking appearance. My first impression was that I had seen him before. When he saw my hesitation he smiled and holding out his hand, he said, "What, don't you recognize me? Have you already forgotten your fellow prisoners?" Then I recognized Dikran Aryan, my old friend. He warned me not to reveal his identity and related how after the events in Constantinople, he had returned to Marsovan disguised, and was at present working for the national cause.

"O, yes," I said, "I remember. Miss Ananian told me about your return."

"Of course, you met her. Arusag is devoted to the revolutionary cause," he said.

"Is she related to you in any way?" I asked.

"Yes, she is my fiancée," he answered, "I hope to marry her as soon as peace and safety are restored."

"Where is she now?" I asked again.

"She is here, in this city. She is nursing."

"Has she no parents?"

"She has her mother and a younger brother, who is studying in the college."

Aryan told me that, Mr. Ananian, Arusag's father, was one of the victims of Musa Bey, the Kurdish chief. During a raid on the village, where the Ananians lived, he was killed with many others who dared to defend their homes and property. Mrs Ananian took her two children to Constantinople

and gave them a good education, sending Arusag to England to be trained as a nurse. Everything was done, through the Armenian Patriarchate, to bring the murderer and the arch enemy of our race to justice, but without result. The Turkish officials would simply smile at the complainants and shelve the petition.

"Aryan," "I said, "I hear that you have passed a resolution in the Executive Committee to collect money by force from the rich Armenians. Is that true? If so, do you think it is a wise thing to do? I know that you need money to carry on the work of self defense. Would it not be better to appeal to the patriotic feelings of the people and get their voluntary gifts? When our rich compatriots feel the need, surely they will open their purses and contribute liberally to the cause of freedom."

"We do not expect to succeed if we leave it to their free will offerings. That method has been tried without appreciative result. We asked the people to contribute willingly. The rich hardly ever responded. Only the common labourers and tradesmen helped us with their mites. Moreover, this method laid us open to exposure and jeopardized our cause. There are some men who go so far as to threaten to betray us to the government."

"Surely not," I said. "I do not believe that there are Armenians mean enough to do such a thing."

"I can point out to you," answered Aryan, "a man, a prominent member in your church, who absolutely refused to give one piastre and roughly turned our representative out of his house. We hear that he is going around and telling people not to pay. He declares that he will apply to the Kaimakam and have all the revolutionaries arrested."

I knew to whom he was referring. Mr. Oscanian was openly against the revolutionary movement, but I did not believe that he would be a traitor to his people. He only talks, I thought.

"Do not blame him," I said. "He is an ignorant man. He has no knowledge of what is going on in the world. He does not read any newspapers. He cannot imagine any better state of affairs. He does not want any change. I believe he is sincere in his conviction that the revolution is harmful. He might be as patriotic as any one of us. He is free to have his own

personal views. Surely you do not condemn a man for his opinions on this question."

"Not at all," Aryan answered. "What is blameworthy in him is his attitude of active hostility towards those who are trying to better our national condition. If he carries out his threat of informing the government about our activities, he will find that it is a dangerous game to play with fire."

"I hope not," I said. "As to the question of demanding money from the rich, what would you do if opposition is shown?"

"What could we do? We need money and we do not have any. We must somehow force the well-to-do to assist us. They must either pay willingly or we shall take it by other means. If the revolution succeeds and our national condition is improved, the wealthy will be benefitted by it more than any other class. The revolutionaries have devoted their lives to this sacred work, and are exposed to danger every day. They are liable to be arrested any time and led to the gallows; is it too much to ask those who are able, to give from their substance, in accordance with their means, twenty-five, fifty, one hundred pounds to carry on the work? We do not make our demands exorbitant. We consider a man's ability to contribute."

A few days after this conversation, the Armenians of the city were aware of the fact that a number of the rich men of the community had received letters from the Revolutionary Committee demanding money in various amounts. This was the subject of discussion wherever a few people gathered. It was said that certain sums had been levied on the business men to carry on the work. The letters enjoined complete secrecy, urged peremptory fulfillment and warned against any act of treason. It was easy to discover the recipients of these letters. Fear and apprehension were painted on their faces. They would not talk about the matter. They retired every-time the subject was mentioned. They were pensive.

To pay the sum of money required was not above their ability. In fact, compared with the wealth they possessed, the amount was very small, but they were afraid to involve themselves with any revolutionary affairs. Even though some of them were in sympathy with the movement, they could not afford to have it known that they rendered financial aid to the revolutionaries. If the government heard of it, they would

be the first to suffer. They would be accused as rebels. How could they convince the officials that they had paid under compulsion! At the same time they were not sure that this is the first and the last demand, that they would not be molested anymore if they yield at this time. Where would it all end?

On the other hand the threat was very definite. They would be exposed to extreme penalty if they refused. They knew the strength of the Committee. Moreover, they had heard that in other places money had been collected in this way and those who had dared to refuse to pay were dealt with severely. They found themselves between the devil and the deep sea.

Each person acted in accordance with his own disposition. Some paid in full without dispute. Others who thought the sum demanded was above their ability to pay, found intermediaries to come to an agreement with the Committee. There were a few who absolutely refused to pay and took the letters to the police headquarters and requested protection. Fortunately, these men did not know the names of the members of the Committee, but they betrayed about a dozen young men who evidently entertained revolutionary ideas. These were immediately arrested and put in jail as the writers of the extortionary letters. They were innocent, however. Much pressure was put upon them to reveal their leaders, but it was not possible to extract any information from them.

The Committee had a meeting to see what could be done about these defaulters. The letters were repeated with more stringent orders to pay, pointing out the seriousness of the act of treason against the national cause; stating that by betraying the members of the secret society, they would incur the organization's severest punishment. It would be to their best interests to avoid frequenting the government house and to break off each and every connection with the police department.

The result was the same. These letters too were doomed to the same fate. One of the opponents went so far as to challenge the revolutionaries to harm him. He openly and repeatedly insulted and taunted them. "Who are those worthless fellows?" he would declare. "There is a government in this country strong enough to crush any act of rebellion. I am well protected."

CHAPTER THREE

THE MEETING PLACE OF THE COMMITTEE IS BETRAYED

*Not such as prats of war but skulk in peace
The bondsman's peace, who sighs for all he lost,
Yet with smooth smile his tyrant can accost,
And wield the slavish sickle, not the sword.*

BYRON

A rumor went around in the city that G. Oscanian had received a final warning to change his course of action, or his life would be in danger. For several days he did not appear in public. He was not in church on Sunday morning. I called on him. He was glad to see me.

He complained that I sympathized with the revolutionaries and sometimes defended their conduct openly. "Even in your sermons you show your agreement with these new-fangled and foolish ideas."

"To what particularly are you referring, may I ask?"

"Was it right what you said a few Sundays ago, about the New Jerusalem? You are encouraging these scoundrels by such sermons."

"What did I say about the New Jerusalem?" I asked again.

"You did not say anything directly, but the inference was plain," he answered. "Everybody understood you to mean that we are going to have a New Armenia."

"That is not my fault," I said. "What can I do if my hearers interpret my words in the way they like?"

"You meant, however, to foster hope and stimulate activity."

"Supposing I did, what then? Supposing that we are expecting a better condition of things and that some are working for its realization. why should you be against them? Do you not desire that the Christian population in our country should have a better treatment at the hands of their Mohammedan neighbors? Do you not wish that more freedom of action should be granted to us to better our national condition? Do you not think that as a race we are oppressed and tyrannized?"

"No, I do not," he hastened to say. "I am well satisfied with my Government. You cannot find a better administrative system for this country. Look how many different people inhabit Turkey. Besides the Turks there are Armenians, Greeks,

Kurds, Arabs, Circassians and so on. Do you think it is an easy matter to manage such a conglomeration? I am convinced that our padishah, his majesty the Sultan, exercises his sovereign power most efficiently. A European Government could not have done better."

This was the mental attitude of many conservative Armenians at that time. An argument founded on ignorance of facts, which they advanced to checkmate any movement for change.

Seeing that it was impossible to have him consider these matters from a different point of view, I tried to persuade him at least to take a neutral position.

"You cannot stop the Revolution," I said. "It is supported by the people. I am speaking to you as a friend. Discontinue your campaign of hostility."

He evidently did not like me to say this. He became excited and assumed a threatening attitude. I thought it advisable to change the subject and to terminate the interview in an amicable manner.

I could not understand why this man showed such open friendliness towards the Government in spite of the repeated warnings of the Committee. Some thought he was paid to spy on the revolutionaries. I was not sure. It is more likely he sincerely believed all that he said and did to be right. He relied on the police to protect him. He was not aware of the strength of the party against whom he fought.

The place of meeting of the Executive Committee was, as usual, in an underground room. The house above was occupied by the Ananian family. Arusag's mother, Mrs. Takouhi, had rented it and was living there with her two children. Of course, she was in full sympathy with the revolutionaries and helped them in every way she could. During the meetings of the Committee she acted as a sentinel in a small room just behind the front door.

On this occasion those present were Dikran Aryan (who was known among his comrades by the name of Levon), his bodyguard, Sisak, Arsen Morookian, second in command and about a dozen other leaders. The question to be settled was, how to stop further betrayals of their comrades. The betrayers were well known, chief among whom was Mr. Oscanian who had been given final warning without any result. It was decided unanimously to subject him to the extreme penalty. It

was their first act of this kind as a committee but they did not hesitate. Aryan was the moving spirit, who having been through several encounters with the Turkish soldiery, was experienced enough to deal with any such critical situations. The time and place of the execution and the executioners appointed. Just as they were breaking up the meeting Mrs. Takouhi ran in and informed them that the house was surrounded by Turkish soldiers. Through the windows of the room, where they had gathered, they could see that a detachment of regular soldiers were taking position in the street, under the command of a captain.

Aryan at once called his followers to arms. Each man took his position, which had been appointed beforehand, with perfect military order. The windows of the ground floor and the front door were fortified. The upper story served as a fortress.

The captain spread his soldiers along the street in front of the house. Rifles in hand, bayonets fixed, they were waiting for the word of command. They were given orders to shoot any who tried to escape. The captain searched the adjoining houses to see if there were any means of exit. The buildings were so close to each other that it was impossible to keep watch over them unless he besieged the whole quarter.

After stationing his men, he approached the house and knocked at the door. There was no answer. He crossed the road and from the opposite side looked up to the windows and called out:

"Open the door and surrender immediately, or we will break through. Do not compel me to use force," he shouted. "The government is informed that you have gathered here to make plans to rob your co-religionists. You are caught in a trap. Surrender is your best course to escape more severe punishment."

The inmates of the house saw that their enemies, the well known traitors, had traced them to their secret place of meeting and had taken this final step to exterminate summarily the members of the Committee and effectively to bring to an end the whole revolutionary movement.

After a while one of the upper windows was opened and a grey haired man put out his head and wanted to know who were there and what was their business. (If we were near enough, we should have recognized Aryan's voice, who dis-

guised, was talking to the Captain.) Behind him, unseen from without, Sisak, a first class marksman, was waiting, his gun pointing to the Captain.

"What do you want?" asked Aryan.

"Open the door," answered the Captain. "Are you the owner of this house?"

"No, I am a guest here."

"We were told that the leaders of the revolutionary party were gathered here at this time, for a meeting," said the Captain. "It is the order of the Sultan that we arrest all the revolutionaries and send them to Constantinople. You seem to be a peaceful old man; it would be better for you to open the door and deliver those rebels to us."

"What reward would the Sultan give me if I deliver them into your hands?" asked Aryan.

"He will decorate you with medals and pay you plenty of money," answered the Captain.

"But if I do not deliver them, what then?"

"You too will be hanged with the others," answered the Captain.

"May I inquire, Captain, how did you know that the Committee was having a meeting at this place and in this hour?"

"O, we were told by some leaders of your people who are faithful subjects of the Sultan. But these so-called revolutionaries are enemies both of the government and of the Armenian community. They are common robbers, in national disguise, who collect money by force and spend it in revelry."

"Is that what you have been told?" again asked Aryan.

"Of course. Otherwise, how should we know all these things. Now, there is no more time for further parley, open the door." So saying, he made a sign to one of the soldiers to turn his gun to Aryan. "Now, are you ready to surrender or shall I begin firing and take your dead bodies to the government house?"

He had hardly spoken these words when Sisak sent a bullet in his direction. But he just moved to one side and a soldier behind him fell to the ground.

This was a signal for general firing. From the street and from the windows, bullets rained. Three more soldiers fell one after the other.

When the Captain saw that the defense was well pre-

pared, he took refuge in the house on the opposite side of the street. He stationed some of the soldiers on the flat roof and others he put behind the windows.

The Armenians did not see them at first and not expecting any attack from the house over the road, were taken by surprise and two of them were shot down. Aryan immediately changed his tactics and rearranged his men. He called down those who were on the roof and sent them to the next house, from the windows of which they could see the opposite side. The fighting continued in this way for some time without any appreciable results. After the first casualties, both leaders were more cautious and fought from more defensible positions.

Aryan noticed suddenly that a soldier came out of the house, ran up the street and disappeared in the direction of the military headquarters. He was sure that the Captain had sent the man for re-enforcements, no doubt to surround the whole neighborhood. He was afraid the innocent people in the neighborhood would suffer. Consequently, he decided to end the fighting. He told Mrs. Ananian to take refuge in one of the adjoining houses. He ordered two of his followers to go through the back streets and prepare the way of retreat as arranged beforehand. Two by two the rest followed. He and Sisak, his bodyguard, engaged the soldiers while their comrades returned in different directions and lost themselves among the population. Before long a detachment of soldiers turned the corner running. When they were near enough, Aryan and Sisak emptied their revolvers among them and retired.

The Turks continued firing for sometime, although there was no answer from the opposite side. Then cautiously approaching the door, they forced an entrance. The house was empty. Only the marks of the fighting were apparent everywhere. The bodies of the two revolutionaries who were killed were taken to the government house to be examined. Nobody knew who they were, nobody had seen them before. A few leading Armenians were brought to identify them. But it seemed they were strangers. They were not known in the city. They had evidently come from outside.

This fact relieved the Armenian population of the apprehension they were in during the fighting. They could disclaim any responsibility; as the men who had taken part in the rebellious act against the Imperial troops, several of whom

were killed and wounded, were outsiders. The government, however, arrested a number of young men and put them in prison. At the trial it was found that they were not guilty. Each of them was able to establish an alibi.

The owner of the house had much trouble clearing himself. He was questioned very closely, but it could not be proved that he had rented his house to the revolutionaries. He had let it to Mrs. Ananian and her family. But it cost him a considerable sum of money, before he could release himself from the clutches of the Turkish officials.

Mrs. Ananian was questioned next. She said that because the house was too large for herself and her children, she had rented one of the rooms to a young man, a sojourner in the city.

"What is his name?" asked the chief of police.

"Sisak," she answered.

"Sisak what?"

"I do not know his second name. We used to call him 'Monsieur Sisak.' He said he came from France."

"Was he an Armenian?"

"I suppose so. He spoke Armenian."

"What is his native town? I mean where was he born?"

"I do not know."

"Had he any firearms?"

"I have never seen any."

"What was his occupation?"

"I do not know."

Afterwards her children were called to the witness stand.

"What is your name?"

"Arusag Ananian."

"What is your work?"

"I am a nurse."

"Where were you during the fighting?"

"In the hospital."

"Did you know Sisak, who used to live in your house?"

"I have seen him, but I have never spoken to him. I live in the hospital."

"Do you know anything about these rebels?"

"I do not. I am entirely taken up with my work."

The hospital authorities testified that Miss Arusag was an industrious, trustworthy and faithful nurse; that they had never seen her with any young man. Her younger brother was

not questioned so closely, He was in the college during the disturbance and was not old enough to concern himself with such matters.

The government felt its defeat. It looked as if the revolutionaries had got the better of them. The Armenian community was secretly rejoicing at the first success. Only the anti-revolutionists were apprehensive.

The question was not, "Who had betrayed the meeting place of the Committee," it was too well known, but "How were the revolutionaries going to deal with the culprits?" There was a general feeling of aversion against the persons who were vile enough to plan the wholesale destruction of the Committee. It was whispered about that capital punishment will be inflicted on the traitors. It was said that the terrorists were waiting for a chance to execute the judgment passed against several men. Nobody dared to speak adversely of the revolution or criticise it. The times were pregnant with unusual happenings.

Several days passed quietly. It was the calm before the storm. I went to see Mrs. Ananian. Aryan was there. I asked him about the rumor of terroristic action against the traitors. "Yes, why not," he answered frankly.

"I am opposed to terrorism on principle. I consider it murder. It will never help towards the success of our cause. It will create bitter animosity between the wealthy and the revolutionaries. It will cause the nation to be divided into two camps. Especially the children and relatives of the men who have been subjected to this kind of punishment will hate the whole movement so deeply that nothing will hinder them from betraying its leaders. In this way instead of rooting out treason, it will multiply the number of traitors."

"Then how do you propose to deal with traitors?" he asked.

"When it has been proved by undeniable evidence that a man has communicated to the enemy the secrets of the Committee, let the fact be published among the Armenians; let him be known as a traitor. Then everybody will turn against him; he will be exposed to the contempt of his compatriots; he will be despised, shunned, even by his own friends. He will be dead morally. This would be a strong enough punishment."

"Do you think they would mind such treatment? They

are despicable, vile creatures without sense of honor. Besides, it will not stop the espionage against which we are trying to guard ourselves," insisted Aryan.

"Then do not give out your secrets," I said. "Keep them to yourselves."

"We do not give out our secrets. But they have their spies, who follow our movements and try to find out where we go, what we do. In this way they discovered our meeting place and sent Turkish soldiers against us. In the fighting two of our brave comrades were killed."

"At any rate, I advise you not to commit murder. Every Armenian that is done to death is a loss to the nation."

"Then you do not believe in the destruction of treachery," he said earnestly. "My friend, you are wrong there. The punishment of a traitor is death. It is a universal law, in every nation and country, the neglect of which will undermine the revolutionary organization and increase disloyalty."

CHAPTER FOUR

TRAITORS

*Treason and murder ever kept together,
As two yoke-devils sworn to either's purpose,
Working so grossly in a natural cause
That admiration did not shoop at them.*

SHAKESPEARE

Every radical change in science, religion and politics has produced opponents: men and women, who have opposed the new order of things. This is natural. It cannot be expected that every individual should fall in with a novel proposition. But when the opponents, instead of submitting to the will of the majority, disconnect themselves from the main body and form a separate organization, they are seceders, they divide the strength of the whole.

When a country is engaged in war, to furnish the enemy with military information constitutes an act of treason. Furthermore if a man steps over to the enemy's side and takes up arms against his own country, he is a traitor and is punished with death.

From Judas Iscariot, through the centuries, up to the time of the World War, traitors have existed. " 'Sblood!" deplures Shakespeare. "An arrant traitor as any is in the universal world, or in France, or in England!" How are they despised! Their end is tragic as a rule.

In our ancient history we have a notorious traitor in the person of Prince Vasak. It was during the fifth century. Christianity had only recently been introduced into the country. But Jezdegerd, the Persian king, was endeavoring to have Zoroastrianism as a universal religion of all of his dominions. He had sent a large army against Armenia, which was part of the Empire, to enforce his will. Vartan the Great, with his small army, confronted the Persian hordes. A war of life and death waged. At a most critical time, Vasak, with his followers, passed to the enemy's side and turned his arms against his own countrymen. He perished miserably in a Persian dungeon, according to tradition.

A case of treason is recorded in the history of the United States. During the revolutionary wars, when General Benedict Arnold was in command of an army in Philadelphia, he was accused of disloyalty, was tried by court martial and reprimanded by Washington. Filled with a sense of wrong and

longing for revenge, he negotiated with the British Commander to betray the fortifications of West Point into his hands. The plot was discovered. Arnold escaped. Leading a pillaging expedition into Virginia, he burned New London and massacred the inhabitants. He spent his last days in England, suffering from melancholia and treated with contempt everywhere.

During the Armenian revolutionary activities such despicable characters came to light. In Marsovan there were at least three men, according to the findings of the Committee, who had entered into treasonable association with the Turkish Government. The first of these was Oscanian, on whom the penalty of death was inflicted.

On a Monday morning, when I was getting ready to go to church for our customary sunrise prayer meeting, the janitor came in running and excited, and exclaimed, "Come to the church, quick. Oscanian has been murdered."

"Oscanian? Where? How?"

"I do not know," he answered. "As I was going to open the door, I heard a loud voice in the distance. He was calling for help. I saw three men turn the corner of the church and disappear. I was afraid to go any nearer. I ran back and came here to tell you."

I hastened to the place of the murder. The body was still warm. Oscanian was lying on his side, in a declivity, just in front of the church. There was no one in the street. I tried to draw the attention of the people in the neighborhood but nobody answered. The windows of the houses were all closed. They were empty. I was bewildered. I was alone. The janitor had not followed me. I opened the door of the church and went into the courtyard. I called out to the people in the back streets. Silence prevailed everywhere.

The condition of the corpse was terrible. In addition to many dagger wounds, the skull was split by an ax. Evidently, after he had fallen, they had hit him on the head, to stop his cries—leaving a cleavage an inch deep on the left ear. The blood was still running down the gutter.

While I was examining the body, I saw Oscanian's two daughters coming down toward me on their way to the church. From a distance they saw the dead body. At first they did not recognize him and, stricken with terror, they turned to run away. But one of the girls had caught sight of the face and, realizing who it was that had been killed, rushed back shriek-

ing and threw herself on her father. I tried to lift her up. Meanwhile the other girl had arrived. Their screams and lamentations filled the air. They would fall on the dead body and embrace it. They themselves were covered with blood. The situation was tragic. There was no one to help me, no one to send for help.

At this critical moment I heard footsteps of men behind the church. Soon they came in sight. An officer with a few soldiers turned the corner, running. Oscanian's young son was leading them. It seems he also had been coming to church, following his father. At the sight of the murderous attack, he had the presence of mind to go to the government house and inform the authorities.

After a while the Kaimakam also arrived. When he saw me standing there near the body trying to keep the girls away from it, he frowned and, looking at me with a displeased expression, he said, "Is this the way to procure independence? Is this how your revolutionary friends try to fight the government? First killing several of our regular soldiers and now butchering their own compatriots. It is the height of folly." After inspecting the dead body, he added sarcastically, "I suppose you approve of it."

I never answered him. I was extremely agitated. There was no disposition on my part to speak. My only anxiety was to help the poor girls.

Gradually a small crowd gathered. The worshipers were arriving without knowing what had happened. The officer ordered the corpse to be taken inside the church. When the clothes were removed, it was found that, there were sixteen dagger wounds, each one of which would have sent him to his grave. The members of the Board of Trustees, who were present, took charge of the body and the congregation was advised to go home. There would be no prayer meeting that morning. There was a mournful look on every face.

On investigation, it was found that the Committee had warned the people in the neighborhood of the penalty to be inflicted on a traitor, and instructed them to absent themselves from home that night to avoid suspicion. That was the reason no one heard when I called for help.

The police began widespread investigation to find the criminals. About fifty of the outstanding young men of the city were gathered and cast into prison. They were examined

closely, but none could be proved to have taken part in the killing. Some were released on presenting indubitable alibis. There were about twenty left in jail. Some of the members of the Committee were among them.

This method of punishing the traitors had the desired effect. There was a subdued air on all sides. Speaking against the revolution ceased altogether. Those who were under suspicion as aiding and abetting the enemy disappeared from public view.

Late one evening a stranger called on me in my house. I did not know him at first, but when he removed his beard and mustache, I at once recognized Dikran Aryan. His disguise was perfect.

"I am greatly annoyed," I said. "I do not like your way of butchering our fellow countrymen. I had advised you to abstain from shedding Armenian blood, but evidently you did not take any notice of it. Terrorism is a bad way to propagate the ideas of freedom."

"I told you at the time," he answered, "that we have to stop this treasonable betrayal of our secrets to the government, and there is no other way than to terrorize the betrayers."

"I am grieved to hear you say so, Aryan," I said. "This course is disastrous. No motive whatsoever could justify such a crime as was committed the other day."

"Excuse me, my friend, you must not use the word 'crime.' It was a legal punishment that Oscanian received," he answered quickly.

"How could it be a 'legal punishment' when he was suddenly attacked and cut to pieces on his way to church to perform his religious duties?"

"As I told you before, one of the elementary rules of revolution, in every age and country, decrees death for treason. This man was a traitor. He did not deny it. He was warned again and again to change his course. He answered with curses and blasphemies. One more chance was given to him before extreme action was taken. He challenged us contemptuously and told us that his government was strong enough to defend him. Now I appeal to your sense of justice. Could we let this dangerous man go free and do all the mischief he could? If the revolution is going to live, the traitors must die."

"I am not even now convinced that this man was a men-

ace to our cause and that it was necessary to put him to death," I said.

"It is plain that you have no confidence in our judgment," said Aryan in derision. "However, do not, for a moment, consider us as criminals. If we shed blood or take money by force, we have no personal motive. Speaking for myself and for my comrades, I can unequivocally declare that we are devoted to this sacred work heart and soul. We have willingly and consciously put our lives in jeopardy. We do not feel safe. At any time a Turkish bullet might find its mark in our hearts. Even now while I am talking to you, I am not sure that spies have not followed me and that I shall not fall in a fight for my life. As for this man, we have proved fully that it was he who directed the government agents to our secret meeting place. Oscanian was not alone in this work. There are others also occupied in this dastardly business who will expiate their sins in due time."

When Aryan saw that I was still hesitating, he took from his pocket a small note book and handed it to me saying, "Read this. Its contents will convince you that you have not been free from the traitor's spying."

As soon as I took the book I glanced through its pages.

"How did you get hold of this note book?" I asked.

"Our terrorists took it from Oscanian's pocket."

"May I keep it?"

"Of course. We have no use for it."

At this moment the barking of a small dog was heard from the street. Aryan stood up and fixing his disguise prepared to leave.

"Are any of the executioners among those who are in jail?" I asked.

"No fear of that," he answered. "They were transported safely elsewhere on the same day. Those who are in prison are innocent."

When I found myself alone, I began to read carefully the note book which was taken from Oscanian's pocket.

It was a diary, started soon after my arrival in Marsovan, recording all my activities, written in the Turkish language. It contained the resume of several of my sermons with their subject matter and the text from the Bible. Sometimes my freedom of expression was exaggerated. At other times sentences were so twisted and translated that they gave a re-

bellious meaning. For instance, once I had preached on Hope. I had expounded the thought that as long as there is breath in a man he has hope. To illustrate this idea, I had used an example from classic literature in which Hope is represented by the picture of a young woman holding a harp whose strings are all broken, except one on which she continues to play without giving way to despair. This was interpreted as a declaration of better times in store for us as instilling confidence in future independence as an encouragement to carry on the work in spite of obstacles and opposition.

After reading the note book through, I wondered whether he had already shown it to the Turkish officials.

While the young men were still in prison another act of terrorism was perpetrated. The second man of the three persons marked for punishment was done to death. He had been silent since the first murder, but the Committee was aware that he was working secretly, and consequently the sentence of death was carried out.

One evening as he walked down a narrow street, returning from his place of business, three Mohammedan hojas (teachers) in flowing white garments and white turbans attacked and killed him.

The police were baffled. It was as plain as day that the revolutionaries, disguised as Mohammedan hojas, had accomplished their purpose, but there was not a single clue to follow. The passers-by had only seen three men run away from the spot where the man had fallen but had not recognized them.

This second murder was evidence that those who were in jail could not be the slayers, and so they were released.

The third man, Mardiros Kerian, knew that his turn had come. He was in continual dread. His whole family trembled with fear. Every morning, before he went to his office, he repaired to the church and received the holy communion from the priest, expecting each day to be his last. Someone always accompanied him, but he had no hope that he could escape the vengeance of the Committee.

In this critical time his son came to see me one day. "Pastor," he said, "we know that you are a friend of the revolutionaries and have influence with them. I have come to ask you to intervene and save my father's life. He promises to have nothing to do with the Turkish government and to

desist from speaking against the revolution."

"My boy," I said, "you are mistaken. I have nothing to do with them. I am neither on the Committee nor a member of the party. How can I help you?"

"I beseech you, in God's name, do something for us. My mother and sisters will go crazy with worry. Our home has become a house of mourning. Everytime that my father goes out, we are in dread, lest he should not come back alive. Rumors have reached us that even if he does not go out, the revolutionaries will set our house on fire and burn us all in it."

These words pierced my heart. I could not reconcile myself to the situation. I believed in the revolution. I knew that without bloodshed there could be no amelioration in our national condition, but these acts of murder against our own compatriots were shocking to me. Betrayals should be prevented, there was no doubt about it, but this slaughtering business was not justifiable. Especially, it was evident that the members of the family were suffering more than the guilty persons. Without giving any promise to the young man, I sent him away with a few encouraging words. The scene in their house, which was painted in my mind, tormented me.

Late that night there was a knock at the front door. My old servant went to the window and wanted to know who it was. Someone answered that he had come from a sick person who desired to see the pastor.

I told the servant to open the door. A slim young man of middle height, with sharp black eyes and watchful countenance entered my room.

"I come from Aryan," he said, without preliminary greeting, "to tell you to absent yourself from the city tomorrow and if possible to stay away for several days."

"First you tell me who you are and what is your name," I asked.

"My name is Sisak and I am Aryan's bodyguard."

"Sisak? O, yes, I remember. Aryan has spoken to me about you. Why does he want me to leave the city?"

"There is going to be an execution sometime tomorrow and he wishes to save you from any complications. Word reached him that Bekir Pasha has come to Marsovan and threatens death to all the revolutionaries and their sympathizers and has several times mentioned your name in his consultation with the Kaimakam. Aryan is afraid that you might

be suspected this time. Being informed of the coming events, you will no doubt take all the necessary precaution."

"Very well. I thank you," I said. "Give my regards to Aryan and tell him to come and see me for a few minutes."

"When? Now?" he asked.

"Yes, now."

"I am afraid that is impossible," he said. "He is occupied with very important business. He could not finish before two hours."

"What is the time now?" Looking at the clock I said, "It is 11:30. Can he come at 1:30 or 2 o'clock? I will wait for him."

"I think he can come at that time," he answered. "I will tell him. Only your servant must not be awake. You have to open the door. When you hear the barking of a dog you will know that Aryan has come."

At the appointed time the signal was given and I opened the door. Aryan looked tired and worn but did not for a moment lose his vigilance. My first question was, "Who is going to be executed tomorrow?"

"Mardiros Kerian," he answered.

"That must not take place," I said.

"Who says so?"

"I say so."

Aryan looked at me wondering if I had lost my head. When he saw that I was perfectly sane and serious he had an inkling of my meaning, hung his head and began to think. For a long time he did not raise his eyes from the ground. At last he looked up and I saw a change had taken place in his unflinching appearance. Compassion and pity were plainly seen fighting for mastery. He spoke and his voice also had altered.

"Pastor, I know how you feel about it all," he said. "Do not regard me as a heartless man. The act of terrorism is our most hated duty. Nobody undertakes it with the readiness that circumstances indicate. The most hardened comrade, when he is obliged to shed the blood of an Armenian, he does it unwillingly. Do you not think that we pity the wives and the children. We commiserate them more than you realize. They are innocent victims of the treachery of their fathers. But why do not the traitors themselves consider the consequences of their act? Is it a patriotic feeling that urges them to follow this contemptible course? Is it the interests of the

nation that they defend when they try to betray us to the Turk, to be subjected to a worse fate than death? Have we no mothers, sisters, dear ones, who suffer for us when we are tormented in a dark dungeon? Do these men pity them? The great majority of the traitors consider their own personal interests. They are mostly men of wealth afraid to lose a few piasters. There are others who are spies by trade. They get position and influence with the Turkish government. Another class of men, genuine turcophiles, who think, speak and act like a Turk, servile in their behavior wherever the government is concerned and naturally fall into line with the officialdom. If a man is honestly convinced that the revolutionary movement is harmful, he should not take the enemy's side and work against those who believe in it. There are hundreds of anti-revolutionists who speak against us, argue with us, but they never betray us. We respect their opinions. Conservative peoples are not our foes. If they do not work in favor of the revolution, they are at least loyal enough to keep in the background and wait for consequences. As to this man, Mardiros Kerian, we have definite proofs that he is guilty and is sentenced to die. Arrangements are made to carry out the execution tomorrow if nothing untoward happens."

"Aryan, I have a proposition to make," I said.

"I would like to hear it," he answered.

"You say that this man is a traitor and worthy of death. Let us suppose for a moment that the sentence against him is just and that he has lost the right to live. Is it not possible to punish him in some other way?"

"How?" he asked.

"Suppose he should buy his life with money," I said.

"Do you mean to say that he should pay ransom for his life?"

"That is exactly what I mean. If this man dies nobody will benefit by his death. The revolution will not be aided by it. If you say that he will continue his nefarious work if he lives, you can make him promise to have nothing to do with the Turkish officials and never to go near them. He has been made to realize the strength of the Committee. He is so frightened that any condition will be acceptable to him if his life is spared. On the other hand, if monetary compensation is taken, with it you can provide funds to carry through your

plans. You have been complaining of the lack of money. Here is a chance to remedy that deficiency."

"Does this proposition come from him, or are you offering it yourself?" he asked.

"To tell you the truth, his young son came to see me and implored me to intercede and to plead with you for his father's life. No, he did not make any offer. I did not promise him anything, but from his words I infer that they are prepared for any sacrifice to spare the man's life."

"I cannot say a thing about it. I must consult my comrades," he answered.

"Very well," I said. "Only as the head of the Party, please use your influence to reverse the decision of the Committee."

On the following day word was brought to me that if he paid one thousand Turkish liras, his life will be spared.

To raise such a large sum on a moment's notice was not an easy matter. Although he was a rich business man he did not have enough in cash. He was obliged to take all the jewels possessed by his wife and daughters and turn them into money. However, he could not pay more than seven hundred liras and proposed to mortgage his khan in the city for the balance. The Committee did not accept the mortgage, took the seven hundred liras and gave him time to pay the rest.

CHAPTER FIVE

BEKIR PASHA AND THE ARMENIAN LEADERS

*They tell me, Liberty, that in thy name,
I may not plead for all the human race;
That some are born to bondage and disgrace,
Some to a heritage of woe and shame,
And some to power supreme and glorious fame,
With my whole soul I spurn the doctrine base.*

GARRISON

The massacre of Sassoon was a harbinger of a series of indiscriminate slaughter of the Armenian population, which took place during a period of twenty years (1895-1915) until it accomplished the Government's premeditated purpose, the depopulation of the Christian elements of Turkey.

Writing of the massacres of 1894-8, J. A. R. Marriott says: "For the last four years Christendom had been resounding with the heartrending cries of the Armenian Christians, butchered in their thousands to make a Sultan's holiday. The story of the Armenian massacres has been told by many competent pens. Pamphlets, articles in contemporary reviews, political speeches, and substantial volumes go to make up a vast literature on the subject. Not the least impressive account is that which is to be found in the papers presented to Parliament in 1896. Stripped of all exaggeration and rhetoric, the story is one of the most horrible, and, for the Christian nations, the most humiliating in the long history of the Eastern Question."

It was said that not only Turkish and Kurdish hordes were the aggressors, but also that the regular soldiers had taken part in the Sassoon massacre. A dozen villages had been reduced to ruins. The men were killed and the women and children were carried away. The shops and houses were plundered. In spite of the endeavor of the authorities to keep the matter in the dark, those who were able to escape the sword spread the sad news all over the country. The European Ambassadors sent their agents to investigate the affair on the spot. Their findings were recorded at the time and are kept in the archives of the Governments.

The news of the carnage in Sassoon created a tense situation in Marsovan. So far the Turks had lived peacefully with the Armenians of this city. But the glowing accounts of the easy pillage of the possessions of the Christians and the abduction of their womenfolk brought in by some of those

who had participated in the massacre, sharpened their cupidity and stirred their Mohammedan licentiousness. The Turks began to take a threatening attitude towards their Armenian neighbors, on many of whom they depended for their livelihood.

Bekir Pasha was in Marsovan on one of his periodical visits. It was my duty to make an official call. At the same time I was anxious to know his disposition towards the recent disturbances. Mustapha Bey, the Kaimakam, was also present. They gave me a cordial reception. After the usual Turkish civilities, he asked questions about the murder of the two prominent Armenians. I said I was sorry that it had actually happened. He wanted to know how long the revolutionaries were going to continue disturbing the peace of the city. I told him I could not say. Then he asked me what was the feeling of the community at large about the revolutionary movement. Again I expressed my ignorance. It was evident that he was trying to suppress his deep feelings and to control his rising anger. I thought it wise to depart before it exploded. So getting up, I excused myself and said goodbye.

The Armenian servant who was in the employ of the Kaimakam was a secret agent of the revolutionary committee. He had a small room next to the office of the governor where he prepared coffee for visitors. He had a good chance to see and hear everything that happened. He reported the following conversation between Bekir Pasha and his subordinate:

"You are treating these revolutionaries very mildly," said Bekir. "You should be more strict with them. Drastic means should be used to crush the whole organization."

"But," answered Mustapha, "in order to uproot the revolution, it is necessary to destroy the whole Armenian community. The revolutionaries are protected wherever they go. The dissatisfaction against the government is widely spread and deeply rooted. There are a few on our side, but they are afraid to show their colors. The two men who have been assassinated were charged with the guilt of betraying the secrets of the movement. They are hated like poison. The revolt is stronger than you think."

"In that case," answered Bekir, "the whole Armenian nation should suffer for it. The Kurds of the Sassoon district have done well. Something of that kind should be done in this city. It would have a salutary effect on these rebels. Some

blood letting will do them no harm."

"But do you not think that persecution will increase dissatisfaction and deepen the bitterness?" asked the lieutenant governor. "Have you not read about the French Revolution, how the common people were oppressed by the ruling aristocracy until they rose as a body, destroyed the despotic government and established the Republic?"

"The circumstances are different. There the nobility and the working classes belonged to the same race. In our country the Armenians are a subject nation. They must obey their rulers, otherwise they will suffer the consequences. Revolt is a heinous crime, punishable with death," insisted Bekir.

"Yes, that is true," said Mustapha Bey. "At the same time we must not forget the difference of standing between the Christian and Moslem elements in Turkey. Let us be honest and admit that while there are a few amongst us who can read and write, it is difficult to find an Armenian who is devoid of this ability. See how many schools they have in proportion to their numbers. In this very city, besides the common schools, there is the college, where hundreds of young Armenians receive higher education. Even their women are educated. Side by side with the college, there is the high school for girls. They study geography, learn history and get acquainted with European and American civilizations. When the young men and young women graduate, they are well informed on many questions. They read books about civil liberties. They discuss the freedom of speech and press. They compare other countries with ours and see the difference. I tell you it is from these colleges and higher educational institutions that the most dangerous revolutionaries have come forth."

"O, I know it," bewailed the Pasha. "If I had my way, I could soon find a remedy for all these troubles. I would just close all the colleges in the country and send their American teachers back to where they belong, never to return. It is these foreigners who are doing the mischief. They abuse the minds of these foolish Armenians."

"Bekir Pasha, we cannot do that," said Mustapha Bey. "In order to prevent the Armenians from receiving new ideas, we must not only close our doors against the Europeans and Americans, but also we must prohibit anybody who wants to travel from this country to other lands. This would necessitate surrounding ourselves with a Chinese Wall and cut off every

kind of communication with the outside world. Even then we shall not succeed. The Chinese people tried that method. What was the result? Could they keep the missionaries and the merchants out? The whole country is overrun by fortune seekers of all nations. In spite of interdiction the stream of travelers could not be stopped."

"I do not trouble my head about these things," demurred Bekir. "I am appointed to be a governor of this province, by His Majesty, and any person who is found guilty of disobedience to the authority of our sovereign, will feel the weight of this iron hand."

"There is a new movement among our own people in Constantinople. Do you know anything about it?" asked the Kaimakam, sounding the opinion of his superior.

"What movement?"

"It is said that a group of young Turks have banded themselves together in a confederacy and are trying to introduce reforms in our system of government. They seem to be dissatisfied with the way the political affairs of the country are conducted."

"Are you referring to the Young Turkish Party?"

"Yes," said Mustapha Bey.

"I have no sympathy with them," answered Bekir Pasha. "Some time ago a military officer of high rank had come to Amasia and was talking to me about it. I did not attach much importance to it."

"I am afraid that those who are backing the movement are not a negligible company of men. They are among the most advanced and the most enlightened young men of the nation. Many of them have an European education. They studied in French and German military institutions and followed closely the civil administration of the governments and realized their superiority. They are endeavoring to introduce new methods in our body-politic."

"O. ho!" cried Bekir Pasha, and laughed heartily. "It seems as if you too are infected with that disease. Is that the reason why you treat these rebellious Armenians tenderly? You stand aside, then. I personally will deal with these givours, (a term applied by Mohammedans to Christians) who dare to show dissatisfaction with the government of His Imperial Majesty."

One day a message was brought to me that Bekir Pasha wished to have an interview with the leaders of our community. I was commanded to get all the prominent men of my church and with them report to the governor's headquarters. The same kind of order was also sent to the Bishop of the Armenian Apostolic Church.

When we arrived at the appointed place, we found that the Mohammedan leaders were also present. Mustapha Bey was absent. The governor was sitting in an arm chair, at his desk. The Turks occupied the chairs on his right hand. He invited us to take the chairs on his left. Coffee and cigarets were brought in and the conference began.

"I have invited you here today to confer with you about the safety of the city of Marsovan," Bekir Pasha said. "I hear that a few men, outsiders I am told, have been trying to spread seditious ideas among the population. You should not tolerate such traitors in our fair city to abuse the minds of our good citizens. It is the duty of every faithful subject to hand over to the police those who attempt to disturb the peace of the community. It was regrettable that a conflict had to take place between our soldiers and these villainous strangers. I am confident that already they have felt the strength of our arms and have cleared out of the city.

"Another matter about which I want to talk to you is the rumor which is spreading everywhere concerning this Sassoon question. It is reported that the Kurds and the Armenians of that district carried on a regular battle, many were killed and much blood was shed. This is an exaggeration. What happened there was simply this. A nomadic tribe of Kurds tried to carry away the cattle of some of the Armenian villagers, but military help arrived in time from the city of Sassoon. The raiders were repulsed, leaving a number of dead behind. Do not believe everything you hear. The government is strong enough to punish the guilty. Woe betide the man or group of men, that opposes its authority. I desire that you, as the leaders of the people admonish them to remain quiet and not be disturbed by agitators. I am going to deal severely with them."

Everybody present was silent. Pasha's attitude was revengeful and his mode of speech threatening. After casting a frowning glance around him, he continued. "I am going to put a great responsibility upon you. I hereby deputize you as the keepers of the peace of the city. We are living in times

fraught with danger. The mob is easily excited. I authorize you to arrest any man who acts seditiously. In order to prevent any unpleasant happening, go to your people and gather all the weapons that they possess and bring them here to me. This will be a test of your sincerity and loyalty toward the government."

When I heard this I knew, as everybody else did, where he was leading us. The whole speech was cunningly constructed to lead to this ultimate purpose. The Armenian representatives felt that it was a trap. No one answered. They were utterly taken aback. Fear paralyzed their tongues.

I was sitting near the governor and turning to him, I asked, "Pasha Effendi, is this order only for the Armenians, or does it apply also to our Moslem neighbors? Do you mean to say that all the firearms should be collected from both the Christian and the Mohammedan?"

"Yes, of course," he answered. "The Turkish population shall deliver their weapons, if they have any. But as far as I have heard, the Armenians more than the Turks, possess firearms. Private persons have no need to carry weapons. We have a strong police department, able to defend peaceful individuals against any aggressors."

Cunning men very often unconsciously leave one corner of the trap open which they set for others. The ulterior aim of Bekir was apparent. He was trying to use us as a tool to disarm the revolutionaries and leave the people defenseless against future eventualities.

Once more, facing him, I made bold to say, "Does this proposition come from a higher authority, or are you making it yourself personally?"

Bekir Pasha turned an angry look at me and shouted, "It is none of your business to know. It is enough that I command. I am the governor of this district. Go and at once begin to work. Otherwise, if any blood is shed, I will hold you responsible."

CHAPTER SIX

A NOTABLE CONFERENCE

*All we have of freedom, all we use or know—
This our fathers bought for us long and long ago.
Ancient Right unnoticed as the breath we draw—
Leave to live by no man's leave, underneath the Law.*

KIPLING

With perturbed minds and ruffled feelings, we left Bekir Pasha's presence. One cannot reason with a man of autocratic nature. His last words plainly indicated impending catastrophe. The nightmare of a massacre oppressed us. We felt our helplessness. Bekir was seeking an excuse to deal a blow to the Christian population and at the same time lay the responsibility on our shoulders. It is true that the members of the revolutionary party were well armed; but what could a hundred young men against a horde of Moslems, amply supplied with firearms and backed by soldiers.

To collect the weapons and deliver them to him was out of the question. The common people had no guns to speak of. A few of them possessed old fashioned flintlocks which would be useless in an emergency. As for the revolutionaries, they would rather give up their lives than part with their rifles. Besides we did not feel disposed to ask for them, and leave the whole community defenseless at the mercy of the enemy. We were in a dilemma.

I went to see the Bishop, to consult with him on the course to be taken. He suggested that we have a joint meeting of the official boards of the two churches and the leaders of the Revolutionary Party to confer on the situation and find means of safety.

I thought the idea was good and agreed with it at once. The time and the place of the conference was chosen and invitations were sent to all concerned.

The conference was held in the council-chamber of the Apostolic Church. There were about fifty persons present, all of them formally recognized as officials of the three organizations. Besides the Bishop there were seven priests and all the deacons and the trustees of the Mother Church. The Executive Committee of the Hunchakian Party had responded to our invitation and repaired to the meeting place in a body. The Evangelical Church was represented by the two official Boards with me as Moderator.

I was elected chairman of the conference. My first act was to get the concurrence of the meeting to have the deliberations carried on behind closed doors. Then it was moved and seconded to have the promise of everybody present to keep the doings of the conference in absolute secrecy. It was approved unanimously by raising the right hand

The order of the day, prepared by the Bishop and me was laid on the table.

1. What should be done with the command of Bekir Pasha to collect the weapons of the people and deliver them to him.

2. Was there any foundation for the apprehension, under which we all were laboring, of an impending massacre?

3. Could we find any legitimate means of preventing such a conflict between the Moslem and Christian inhabitants of Marsovan?

4. What attitude to take in the presence of an inevitable danger.

As to the first question, could we present ourselves to the people and ask them to turn over their weapons to the government in spite of the fear we felt of an encounter? Even if such a course was agreed upon, could we succeed? Who would be willing to surrender the only means of defense at a critical time like the present. Suppose for a moment that we obeyed the mandate of the governor and our congregations submitted without resistance, could we justify ourselves in the event of a rising by the Turkish populace which resulted in the butchering of helpless and defenseless Armenians?

Hagop Manoogian, a young member of the National Council of the Apostolic Church, asked "Can anyone tell us to what extent the people are armed? Are there any really good weapons, fit for action, owned by private individuals?"

Sarkis Torikian, the apothecary, answered, "As far as I know the people have no firearms. A few possess a revolver or an old musket which they carry when they are traveling on business, such as peddlers and vineyardists and farmers."

The old man, Bedros Manooshakian, remarksd that, "The governor was alluding to the revolutionaries, when he said, 'as far as I know, the Armenians, more than the Turks possess firearms.' He is well aware of the fact that the tradesmen and the merchants do not have weapons in their possession. The fight, a few days ago, between the members of the Committee

and the soldiers, during which several of the latter were killed, has opened the eyes of the Turkish officials. They believe that the revolutionaries have a large store of arms and ammunition."

Another man added, "A Turkish neighbor of mine told me that the Committee has bought a large quantity of arms from a European country and is trying to raise money to pay for it. He said he heard it from a reliable source."

Everybody turned toward the revolutionaries who were sitting together in a group. They kept silent neither denying nor confirming the statement.

After exchanging various views on the question, the chairman called upon the members of the Committee to express their sentiments on this question. Dikran Aryan answered briefly, "As you know, we are armed for self-defense. If we are required to surrender our weapons, we will not hand over even a pocket knife."

Rev. Mardiros Gulesarian suggested that we gather the guns of the farmers and vineyardists and deliver them to Bekir Pasha and tell him that these are what we could collect.

Manookian answered that it would not satisfy him. He would think that we are laughing at him. He would naturally want to know if these were the rifles, with which a regular warfare was waged against the soldiers. "According to what I have heard, they extracted the bullets from the bodies of the dead soldiers and discovered that they were discharged from Martini guns. Such a course as was suggested, would enrage him more than ever."

At last we admitted our defeat and helplessness in this matter.

The rest of the questions to be deliberated upon were taken together, as they were vitally related.

If there was any foundation for our presentiment of a massacre, what means could be employed to prevent it? And if it could not be prevented, what should be our course in time of danger?

There was silence for a few minutes. At last Haig Morokian, an active and influential member of the revolutionary Committee stood up and said:

"Mr. Chairman, the question before us is, will there be a massacre in this city and what can we do to prevent it? I believe in every mind there is the fear of an encounter although

most hesitate to express it. If what the Turks say is true, the order has come from higher up and is general. I will not try to speak of the causes for such an order. But I will say that the central government in Constantinople has taken this step to crush the Armenians whom she considers form a troublesome element in Turkey. This is my conviction, based on observation of recent events and on reading about the transactions which have taken place lately between the Sultan and the European ambassadors. We can do nothing to prevent bloodshed. A massacre is planned and decided upon. Never think for a moment that by surrendering our weapons we shall be out of danger. If we submit to Bekir's commands, we shall be more easily butchered. Our safety is found only in self-defense. Warn the people. Watch closely the movements of the enemy. Provide means of self protection as much as you can. If it were possible, I would put a gun in the hand of every able-bodied Armenian. But that is not possible in the present circumstances. Therefore, I say, let every man keep what he has and turn his house into a fortress, always ready, always vigilant. At the first sign of trouble, let us all repair to our homes and stand guard over our wives and children. Who knows, if we keep on fighting, help might arrive from outside. Evidently the massacre of Sassoon has drawn the attention of the foreign ambassadors, who are negotiating with the Sublime Port for permission to investigate the matter on the very spot where the tragedy took place. They are demanding that the representatives of the embassies should join the Turkish commissioners of enquiry. What we can do is to defend ourselves as long as we can. If help arrives in time, well and good. If not, we will die fighting."

Margos Aghabekian, a well known merchant in the city stood up and said, "I object to the reference which the speaker has made to the arming of the people and fighting against the government. This is a delicate question and we should be careful how to express ourselves. Let us follow the course of wisdom. Opposition will end in disaster. We cannot possibly hope to succeed in defending ourselves by force of arms. It is foolish to think that a handful of men, although well armed and brave, could resist the onslaught of the Turkish mob and a company of trained soldiers. Submission is the best policy under the present circumstances. I have nothing to say against the revolution. I am in sympathy with it and I have willingly

contributed for its support. Its aim should be to improve the condition of the people mentally, morally and materially. But I draw the line when it comes to declaring war against the government. We do not need any change. We are better off in every respect than the Turks. Every store you enter in the city is owned by the Armenians. All the business is in our hands. We possess the best houses. All the factories are run by the Armenians. Many of the Turkish people are employed by us; they look to us for their livelihood. We have the wealth of the city. There is no interference on the part of the government with our schools and churches. We enjoy perfect freedom. Why should we rebel?"

This declaration brought an immediate response from the revolutionaries. Morookian jumped to his feet and said, "Mr. Chairman, my words have been misunderstood. I never declared war against the government. What I said was simply to defend ourselves. We are not the aggressors. Is not self-defense the duty of every human being? Do not even the dumb animals sacrifice their lives, if need be, to protect their little ones? Can the gentleman guarantee that submission will insure us against bloodshed? We have submitted long enough and have seen no improvement in our condition. Let us show that we are men and know how to fight for our human rights. We are not going to be slaughtered like sheep."

Stepan Beckian, a lawyer, who was in continual contact with the Turkish officials because of his profession, stood up and said, "I will not be misunderstood, I hope, when I say that the revolution is partly responsible for the present hostility between the Turks and the Armenians. Until the appearance of the revolutionaries, there was no ill feelings between these two elements of the population. The Turks have always been friendly with us in the past. There has been no antagonism against the Christians among the government circles, as far as I know. And I should know since I am always with them. Nobody can throw any suspicion on my patriotism. I love my people as well as any revolutionary. This estrangement, this conflict is unfortunate to say the least. There is a good deal of truth in what Aghabekian says. In spite of the Turk being the ruling power in the country, the Armenians are left free to exercise their abilities in commerce and industry. As merchants and producers they have stood on a higher level than their Mohammedan neighbors. Not only in the cities,

but also in country places, they are better off than the Turks and Kurds. In any village you enter you notice the difference. When you see a well-kept orchard of fruit trees, a highly cultivated piece of land where vegetables of all kinds grow, a beautiful vineyard, with rows of vines, heavy with vintage, you know that they belong to the Armenians. It is true that we are a subject nation politically, but what of that? We are a ruling power industrially and commercially. The Mohammedan peoples are subject to us for their sustenance."

Karabed Tomasian, another leader of the revolutionary party, refuted Beckian's statement, by saying, "I challenge the former speaker to prove that the condition of the Armenians in the outlying villages is satisfactory. No doubt our compatriots through their inherent ability to better themselves, improve their condition wherever they are and prosper, but are they left unmolested to enjoy the fruits of their labour? How often are they plundered by the wild Kurds? If Beckian had followed carefully the transactions of our National Council in Constantinople, he would have been aware that hardly a day passes without a petition arriving in the Patriarchate from the Armenian villages, complaining of pillages and murders, asking the Patriarch to mediate with the authorities for protection. Do the flourishing gardens and thriving vineyards, the flocks of sheep and herds of cattle prove that the owners are free to enjoy them? Does not, on the contrary, this prosperity stimulate the cupidity of their lazy and felonious Moslem neighbors? It is a well known fact that the Armenian farmers are never safe. Not only do the heavy and unjust government taxes weigh upon them and do they suffer from the zaptiehs, who come annually and take away a substantial part of their products but they are also in continual dread of the Kurdish chiefs who dwell in the mountain fastnesses of Armenia. Any time one of them can raid with his hordes of followers and deprive the farmer of his possessions. Resistance is useless and very often means wholesale slaughter. How can you expect moral and material progress where such a condition exists? The first requisite for advancement is safety. Can you say that a man is better off for having accumulated wealth by his intelligence and industry when he is not sure that it will remain in his hands? Do you blame the revolutionaries who go to these villagers and teach them the art of self-defense? Useless, you will say. They are not strong enough to defend them-

selves; they will be murdered more readily. Very well then, could the ultra prudent gentlemen show a better way to improve the state of affairs? It is a mistake to say that the revolution is an arbitrary organization brought about by a bunch of irresponsible young men who have nothing to lose. Nothing to lose? We, who belong to it, are liable to lose possessions a thousand times more valuable than material goods. We jeopardize our lives. The revolution is not responsible for these sufferings. It is the natural and spontaneous outcome of oppression and intolerable treatment."

Bishop Seropian, a little excited, drew everybody's attention to himself when he spoke in his deep, low voice, without rising. "As a shepherd of my people, I have been in almost every district where the Armenians live. I have been an eyewitness to hundreds of outrageous acts and violent persecutions by the Kurds and Circassians against my congregations. I beseech you, do not ignore these facts; do not shut your eyes to the unbearable condition of the helpless farmers. In some outlying parts of the country, they are no better than slaves to the Kurdish chiefs. Their cattle and sheep, their yearly products of wheat and barley, butter and cheese, even their wives and daughters are at the mercy of these lawless savages. You who live in the cities, in comparative safety, should not speak lightly of these sufferings. Personal interests should not raise barriers against those who endeavor to find a way out of the trouble. If the older and more experienced men will do nothing to help, the younger generation will take up the national cause and prosecute it in their own way. Do not let any selfish motives influence your conduct in this matter. In the presence of indifference and lack of sympathy, the Spirit of Mother Armenia mourns and sheds tears." There were cheers from the revolutionaries.

"May I add my own personal testimony on what our beloved Bishop has said," spoke up Arshak Tatossian, the superintendent of the National schools. "Before I accepted this position and came to Marsovan, I was, for many years, one of the secretaries of the Patriarchate in Constantinople. It was my duty to read the petitions sent from the provinces and put them on file. This gave me a good opportunity to know what was going on in the interior of the country. There are hundreds of these documents, piled up in the archives of our national headquarters. Some of them are most pathetic and heart-

rending. They all recite the same story of pillages, raids, kidnappings and murders. They supplicate for help. What is recorded is not one-thousandth part of the violence committed by the Kurds and Turks, but even what is known is sufficient to show that in some regions the condition is beyond endurance. I have no manuscripts at hand, but I will mention only a few from memory."

"On the night of the Wednesday of the Passion Week, the Kurds climbed over the outer walls of the monastery near the city of Alashkerd, attacked the elderly abbott, tore him to pieces and plundered the abbey and the neighboring churches. Appeal to the government brought no results.

"In Tokat the Circassians kidnapped a young Armenian girl. Her relatives tried to save her. The enemy was too strong and the police would not interpose. The girl was not returned. The culprits were not punished.

"The Turkish inhabitants of the village of Baba-Sultan raided the Armenian village of Yenigeh, near Brusa, robbed several shops, carried away a number of sheep, beat those who resisted, captured a woman working in the fields and retired. This was repeated many times. The Armenian farmers were obliged to leave their possessions behind and seek security in the towns.

"These atrocities were perpetrated not very far from Constantinople, in easy communication with the Central Government, and yet no steps were taken to prevent them. The state of affairs was much worse in the distant localities where outside help could not be easily procured. In many cases the alternative was either to submit slavishly or die fighting for elementary human rights. From Brusa to Orfa, from Adana to Van, all over the country the same lamentation was heard. Bitlis, Moosh, Kharpoot suffered most of all. Diarbekir was plagued by Fetteh Bey, a bloodthirsty Kurdish chief. Musa Bey, another robber, was devastating the country further south. The people of Van district were suffering from the periodical raids of the Timurian clan. To every complaint the local authorities turned a deaf ear."

"Is it not possible to remedy our troubles by peaceful means?" someone asked. "We have a number of Armenian statesmen who serve the government and have great influence with the Turkish officials, even with the Sultan. Why do they not intercede and plead in favour of the sufferers?"

"Peaceful means have been applied again and again in the past without any results," answered Professor Vemian, one of the teachers in the college. "Two of our most patriotic patriarchs, Mugerdich Khrimian (1869-1873) and Nerses Varjabedian (1874-1881), backed by the National Council, repeatedly petitioned the Sublime Port to ameliorate the condition of the suffering Armenians. Every time the answer was the Turkish formula, Baly Effendim—very well, sir—and the petition was thrown aside. Varjabedian, despairing of getting any help from the government, turned his attention to European powers. A favourable occasion was presented when the victorious Russian army advanced as far as the gates of the capital. He sent a delegation to the commander in chief of the invaders and asked that the Armenian question to be taken into consideration in the treaty of peace. The treaty of San Stefano was signed between the two belligerents on March 3, 1878, and the article 16 was added, according to which the Sublime Port agreed to introduce, without delay, reformation in the Armenian provinces and guaranteed the safety of the Armenians against the Kurds and Circassians.

"Europe, however, was not prepared to see Turkey crushed under the heels of Russia. Led by England the Congress of Berlin was convened, later in the same year, where the accredited representatives of the great Powers assembled to reconsider and readjust the Treaty of San Stefano. Patriarch Nerses, with the consent of the National Council, dispatched a commission to Berlin, composed of two archbishops (Mugerdich Khrimian and Khoren Narbey) and two laymen (Stepan Aslanian and Minas Cheraz) to plead with the envoys of the great Powers for the cause of Armenia. The Congress refused to admit the Armenian representatives into their counsels, but on the motion of Lord Salisbury the Armenian question was taken up as an item of business. The result was the 61st article of the Berlin Treaty. Here it is. "The Sublime Port undertakes to carry out without further delay the improvements and reforms demanded by local requirements in the provinces inhabited by the Armenians, and to guarantee their security against the Kurds and Circassians. The Sublime Port will periodically make known the steps taken to this effect to the Powers who will superintend their application."

To counteract Russia's further conquests into the Turkish territories the British Government made a convention with

the Sultan, under which, in return for the occupation of the island of Cyprus by the British, England assumed the responsibility of defending the integrity of the Asiatic possessions of Turkey and at the same time urging the Sultan to introduce the necessary reforms for the improvement of the condition of the Christian populations.

Our recognized statesmen who are employed by the Turkish Government, unfortunately are not interested in the Armenian question at all. More than that, they are absolutely against any kind of patriotic movement. When an Armenian, with few exceptions, gets into the Turkish official circle and rises to a high position, he becomes worse than a Turk himself. I do not mean that he changes his religion and nationality, but very often he becomes a more ardent turkophile than a real Turk. At the present time we have dozens of Armenians who work for the Government, and there are those whose word has great weight with the Sultan. Tell me, has any one of them raised his voice in favor of the cause of Armenia? If he could really understand our troubles, which is doubtful, he would be afraid to lose his office and position to do anything to alleviate our sufferings."

Parsegh Goshgarian, the treasurer of the Evangelical Church made a proposition. He said, "To come back to our main question, that is, what to do to prevent a massacre in this city, I move that we appeal to the European ambassadors in Constantinople, present our precarious situation and ask them to help us. According to what has been said, there is no use to applying to the higher Turkish authorities. Let us follow the example of our former patriarchs and invoke the aid of the representatives of great Powers. They are bound to protect us by treaty obligations."

Professor A. Siraganian seconded the motion with an amendment. He said, "That is a good idea. But all of the ambassadors are not friendly with us. For instance the Germans lately have adopted a policy of winning the favor of the Turkish government. The Kaiser has been employing flattery and adulation to gain territorial concession from the Sultan. They will never do anything to alienate the Turks. And the Russians have taken a bitterly hostile attitude towards the Eastern question since 1878, when, as they think, the fruits of their hard won victory were snatched from their hands by the united action of the Powers of Europe. They are specially provok-

ed to anger against the British, through whose instrumentality mainly the treaty of San Stefano was modified by the Congress of Berlin. They call it an act of perfidy, when later England made a private convention with Turkey and virtually possessed the island of Cyprus. Only recently Lord Salisbury tested the temper of the Russians. He applied to them to take united action against the Sultan for his failure to introduce reforms in the country. The Russians not only would do nothing to help, but did secretly encourage the Turks to continue in their course of oppression and persecution of the Christians.

"I, therefore, in seconding this motion make an amendment, that our application should go only to the British ambassador. England is bound through the Cyprus Convention to protect us."

The motion in its amended form was unanimously adopted.

The next question was to prepare the petition. How should it be worded? Could we present our troubles in plain language? What proofs have we for our anticipation of evil? The fact that a massacre has taken place in Sassoon cannot constitute a legal ground for our suspicion that the same would necessarily happen here. Especially if such a petition should come to light the danger would be augmented. The act of treason would be added to the act of rebellion. That alone would be a sufficient excuse to justify the government, if not to massacre the whole Armenian population of the city, at least to send us all to the gallows.

Then what means should be employed to send a report to Constantinople of our precarious situation? Hagop Manoogian suggested that one of us should go to the capital and see the ambassador privately and ask for help. He said, "I propose that our chairman be delegated by this conference, representing the whole Armenian community of Marsovan, to go to Constantinople and interview the British Ambassador."

Evidently this proposition was acceptable by all. When my consent was asked, I agreed to assume this duty on two conditions. First, that the letter of introduction should be signed by all the members present. Second, that it should be sent to whom it belonged by indirect ways. "I do not want to carry such a document on my person."

My purpose of requiring all their signatures was to prevent any act of treachery.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SIR PHILIP CURRIE AND THE ARMENIAN QUESTION

*Hereditary bondsmen! know ye not
Who would be free themselves must strike the blow?
By their right arms the conquest must be wrought?
Will Gaul or Muscovite redress ye? No!
True, they may lay your proud despoilers low,
But not for you will Freedom's alters flame.*

BYRON

Without losing time, the letter was prepared and signed by everyone who took part in the Conference. It was sent through the agency of the revolutionary party to Samson and mailed at the French Post Office there. It reached its destination safely.

I applied for my passport to go to Constantinople ostensibly for a vacation, and received it without difficulty. It was in the month of July. The air was balmy. The sea was calm. The journey soothed my jangled nerves after months of turmoil. It was a real vacation.

Entering the straits of Bosphorus, traveling from north to south, separating Asia from Europe, and connecting the sea of Marmora with the Black Sea, one passes thickly wooded shores, picturesque hills, and beautiful summer residences. On both sides, the coast is studded with small towns between which ply comfortable steamers, transferring passengers from one place to another.

On my arrival I called at the British Embassy. One of the secretaries informed me that the ambassador was at his summer house and directed me to go there.

Sir Philip Currie was a man of about sixty years of age, with blue eyes and gray hair. He impressed me as an able statesman. He led me to his pavilion and as soon as we were seated, he plunged into the business of my mission. He wanted to know what was the trouble in Marsovan.

I told him of the unrest prevailing in our town, of the dangerous situation in which we find ourselves, of the excited state of mind of the Turkish population, of the hostile attitude of the government toward the Armenians, and of our fear of a massacre. I related all that transpired between Bekir Pasha and the Armenian leaders in a conference. How he demanded that we should go to our people and urge them to deliver their weapons and hand them over to the government. "The com-

mon people have no weapons," I said. "Only the revolutionaries possess firearms and they will not part with them at any price. We cannot ask that they surrender them. It is evident to us that the Turkish stratagem aims first at disarming the Christians and then massacring them and laying the responsibility on the leading men."

"Are there many revolutionaries in Marsovan?" asked Sir Philip.

"I do not know the exact number, but there are quite a few of them."

"Are they active? Do they stir the people to revolt against the government?"

"I am sure they do not," I answered. "They are active, but their activity is confined to teaching the people how to defend themselves. They foresee the danger and raise a voice of warning. They are not rebels, in the sense that they plan to destroy the Turkish dominion in the Armenian provinces and establish a separate autonomy. What they desire, what we all desire is to live peaceably and to have security for our lives and property. As it is, life is unendurable for the Armenians, not only in the villages where they suffer all kinds of outrages in the hands of their Kurdish neighbors, but also in the cities where the Christians are not treated by the government on an equal footing with the Moslems."

"The Turks tell me that the revolution among the Armenians has been originated by Russian agitators in the employ of the Russian government, that most of the trouble makers come from over the border, that the native Christian population is well satisfied with their present state of existence. How true is this statement?" he asked.

"It is not true at all," I answered. "I have never met a single revolutionary worker who has come from Russia. All of the leaders are native born Armenians. Moreover they are highly educated young men. Some of them have been in Europe and America and received their academic training in great universities. There are among them teachers, doctors, architects and writers. The revolution is not an imported commodity; it is the natural outgrowth of discontent, without external intervention."

"That is so," he affirmed. "In every revolutionary movement, it is the educated young men who lead the way. Education opens their eyes, widens their outlook and subjection to

an unjust power becomes irksome. When the ruling element is stationary, will not or can not march with the progress of the times, trouble is inevitable."

"You have put your finger on the sore spot, Sir Philip," I said. "You must admit that with all our faults, we are a progressive people. We love education. We are more amenable to European civilization than the nation that lords over us. Our rulers, not only will not advance themselves, but would hinder us, like the dog in the manger, from eating our fill the fruits of modern civilization. They still cling to the old methods of governing their subjects by oppression and terrorism."

"Is there religious persecution against the Christians? Is it not true that you enjoy perfect freedom in pursuing your religious duties? I understand that no hindrances are laid in your way to worship God in accordance with the dictates of your hearts. You are not molested when you gather in your churches for divine service. You are privileged to ring the bells to proclaim the hour of worship, which is more than the nonconformists in England enjoy, who on account of an ancient law cannot have bells," he averred, smiling.

"What you say is apparently true," I answered. "The comparative freedom which the Christians enjoy today is not granted willingly by the state. The Mohammedan authorities were forced to stop persecuting them by the Christian governments of Europe, especially by England. Islam is intrinsically an intolerant religion. It does not permit any of its followers to turn to another faith. Death is the punishment of a Moslem, who accepts Christianity. It was about fifty years ago (1843) that a tragic occurrence led the ambassadors of the great Powers to intervene and put a stop to the religious persecution. An Armenian formally accepted Mohammedanism. After a while he repented, confessed to the priest and came back to the fold. He was at once arrested, cast into jail and tormented. His friends appealed to Lord Canning, the British ambassador, who mediated and tried to save the man. The Sheikh-ul-Islam (the Mohammedan chief priest) however, decreed otherwise, and he was hanged in a public square. Lord Canning was provoked to take more stringent action. Persuading the other ambassadors to join with him, he sent a very strong demand to the sultan to grant religious liberty to all nations in the empire. The Turkish government could not ignore the united

voice of Europe and yielded outwardly to the extent of allowing the use of bells."

"That was fifty years ago. Surely now it is different. No discrimination is made between Christian and Moslem," said Sir Philip.

"There is no persecution of the Christians openly; but there is no change of heart in our Mohammedan masters," I answered. "The ruling element looks down upon us with contempt and aversion. It is considered sacrilegious to come into contact with a Christian. A Moslem is profaned by even touching a Giaour, who is an unbeliever, and infidel, a kaffir, a blasphemer. All Christians are unclean, whether Armenian or Greek, French or English. I remember witnessing an English lady attempting to shake hands with a Moslem who was introduced to her. When she put out her hand, he would not take it; then suddenly, changing his mind, he took the end of his outer garment and through it pressed the white delicate hand stretched to him. I felt like striking the fellow. It is the teaching of the Koran that to touch a Christian is desecrating. He has to go through his ablutions once more to be morally purified."

"In addition to the religious differences, are there other causes of friction between Turks and Armenians? I have heard that the Turks are a noble race, generous, truthful, magnanimous. On the contrary the Armenians are described as a nation of shopkeepers who think of nothing else except their personal gains, grasping, cheating, lying. They are sharp in their business dealings and rob the Turks and Kurds, in consequence of which they are ill-treated."

"I know that there are a number of French and English writers who misrepresent the case. They have reasons of their own for doing this. But the facts stand for investigation. Any European who has lived in Turkey for a length of time and who has come into contact with both elements will tell you a different story. The Turks are not amenable to western culture. They have no appreciation for arts and sciences. They despise commerce. Erudition among them consists of repeating verses of the Koran, learning the requirements of the religious ceremonies and remembering the traditions of the ancients. They devote their time and energy mostly to military training. Compulsory enrollment has made of them a nation of soldiers. The government officials form another class. The greatest

ambition of a Turkish young man is to get a position in one of the departments of the administration. Very few of them try to learn a trade or go into business. On the other hand the Christians are not eligible for military service and very seldom succeed in getting employment of a public nature. Consequently, the commercial fields are left open to them and they take full advantage of the situation. Most merchants, business men, tradespeople in the country are Armenians and Greeks. They are better off financially than the Moslems. They appear greedy and grasping in their business dealing because they make money, but they are not more so than any European or American business man. There is one feature, however, which I will admit. Centuries of aggression and persecution have led them to form the habit of being cunning and secretive. To avoid exciting the cupidity of their Moslem neighbors, the Armenians keep secret what they possess. They shun any kind of demonstration of their wealth. It is simply the result of lack of security.

“Perhaps another cause should be mentioned why the Turks and the Armenians cannot get along together. There is a great difference in the mode of living between these two communities. The Turkish people have no social life to speak of. Men and women are separated from one another. They do not meet together socially. The harem system keeps the women away from all public functions. There are no mixed societies. Even in their religious service women are excluded. Their homes are closed against friends and acquaintances. Women among the Mohammedans are a little better than slaves. Polygamy is freely practised. The well-to-do divide their houses into two parts, one for men and one for women. They never travel together. One cannot speak with a Moslem about his wife or ask him how she is. When a Turkish woman goes out she must cover her face. No man must see her. This manner of life has opened a deep gap between the Armenians and Turks.

“A French writer who is a friend of the Turks says—‘Nature has endowed them with mind and heart, but has refused to give them taste and receptivity for arts and literature. Even Arabic and Persian poets, falling into their hands, lose their freshness. The Turks are simple, honest, temperate, faithful and grateful; but they are rough, ignorant, selfish and lazy.’ Another man says—‘In state and administrative af-

fairs they are despotic; in religion they are dogmatic and intolerant. They are as ignorant of their national history, as they are of the history of other nations. This is noticeable even among those who are supposed to be educated. Their virtues are the virtues of barbarians.'

"Count von Moltke, in his Letters from Turkey declares —'The Turks are good for destroying; they never mend. Turkish towns present the appearance of abandonment. They are fallen into ruins not so much from time, as by the hand of man. Mohammedans have turned the churches into mosques, but those very mosques are in ruins today.'

"The Turkish nation all through the centuries has not built, it has destroyed. No architecture of great renown has been produced without the help of non-Moslems. Even the great palaces where the Sultans reside and which are the ornaments of the straits of Bosphorus, are designed and constructed by Christians. Not a scientist, a poet, or man of letters of fame has come out of the race. In their own special line, in politics, or in military science, no leader of genius has appeared. Their boasted conquests of the past can be accounted for by the superiority of their numbers and by the disorganized condition of the Christian nations."

"You have painted the picture with too dark colors, have you not?" asked Sir Philip Currie in an incredulous tone.

"I will answer that question in the words of C. B. Norman, the correspondent of the Times, during the Russo-Turkish War," I said. "Speaking of the incredible atrocities committed against the Armenians by the Turkish soldiers, he stated that 'The subject is too painful to need any coloring.' At the same time I will concede that our patriotic instinct has something to do with this present situation. It is impossible not to feel the difference of standing between these two elements, —one stagnant and conservative, the other alive and progressive. We feel with pardonable pride our mental and moral superiority over the ruling group. A priceless heritage has come down to us from the dawn of history. Our national annals are studded with heroic achievements. The memory of our ancient heroes and martyrs, our kings and their conquests, sacrifices willingly offered for the continuance of our national existence could not lightly be swept aside and sunk into oblivion. We value highly our grand language and distinctive alphabet, our golden age for culture and literature, our cen-

turies-old Christian Church and its magnificent ritual. The present generation has been awakened and is endeavoring actively to come into its own; to possess the inheritance bequeathed to us by our forefathers. Not only among the educated classes, but also among the working men and farmers this new spirit of nationalism is being cultivated. The gall of subjection to a less-educated power has become intolerable. Only the other day one of the members of the National Council, in the patriarchate, stood up and declared that our duty is not only to protect the religion which we inherited from our forefathers but also to cultivate the patriotic spirit, that is one of the means of keeping the nation from becoming extinct."

After thinking a little while, Sir Philip Currie asked, "Why do you come to me with your troubles? What have I to do with them? Why do you not go to your own national headquarters and lay your case before the Patriarch and through him to the Turkish authorities? Do you not think that by applying to me you lay yourselves open to suspicion for treason against your government?"

I could see that he was testing the solidity of my grounds for coming to him. He was trying to find out if I was aware of the fact that the British Government had taken upon herself the responsibility of protecting the Christians in Turkey. He was not speaking like a man who is shirking his duty.

"As to your suggestion to go to the Turkish government for succour from our distress, I can assure you that we have not neglected that course of action. It has been tried again and again, officially and privately, without any result. Several of our patriarchs, even those who enjoyed the confidence of the Sultan, petitioned him for relief. Each time, not only help was not extended, on the contrary, the severity was increased, the pressure was tightened. There is no hope from that quarter. But as to why we appeal to you, we consider England to be our only friend. The English people have always sympathized with the oppressed and the suffering. It was through their influence mostly that the British Government helped to release the Balkan nations from the clutches of the Turk. Even now the news of the massacre of Sassoon, where a number of villages were pillaged and burnt and several hundred people were killed, has sent a feeling of horror throughout the British Isles and a popular voice is raised to punish the culprits.

“But mainly we apply to you personally as the British ambassador, because England has undertaken to protect the Christian populations in Turkey against the ill treatment of Kurds and Circassians. This duty, at first, was assumed by Russia through the treaty of San Stefano, which was later modified in the congress of Berlin causing great dissatisfaction to the Armenian expectations. The 61st article of the Berlin Treaty took away from Russia the obligation and laid it upon the shoulders of all the Powers collectively.

“This was, however, rectified by Great Britain, when she signed the Cyprus Convention, assuming individual responsibility. ‘If any attempt shall be made at any future time by Russia to take possession of any further territories of his Imperial Majesty the Sultan in Asia . . . England engages to join the . . . Sultan in defending them by force of arms. In return, the Sultan promises to England to introduce necessary reforms, to be agreed upon later between the two Powers, into the government, and for the protection, of the Christian and other subjects of the Port in these territories, and, in order to enable England to make necessary provision for executing her engagement, the Sultan further consents to assign the Island of Cyprus to be occupied and administered by England.’

“From that date (1878) up to the present time we have looked upon England as our protector and lived with the assurance of security. We, the Armenians of Marsovan, believe that you will be able and willing to help us in these critical times. We feel ourselves in dire peril. It is our duty to inform you of our precarious situation. That is the object of my mission. I am delegated to come and ask you to prevent bloodshed in our town. As you say in English, ‘prevention is better than cure.’

“I am going to see the Grand Vizier (the Prime Minister) tomorrow on some state business. You come with me and tell him what you have told me about your fears of coming trouble.”

“I cannot do that, Sir Philip,” I answered. “I dare not present myself to him as a complainant and reveal my identity. I shall jeopardize my life by such a course.”

“Do not be afraid,” he said. “I will protect you. He cannot harm you. Judge Tarring tells me that you are well recom-

mended by your English friends. The Turks shall not do you any injury."

"I thank you. I know you will protect me. But I am going back to Marsovan to live among the Turks. If Bekir Pasha would have an inkling of the object of my mission here, he will be exasperated. I would earnestly ask you not to mention my name when you speak to the Grand Vizier."

"I understand," he said. "I will do my best."

CHAPTER EIGHT

SHADOW OF DEATH

*Yea, though I walk through the valley
Of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me;
Thy rod and Thy staff; they comfort me.*

KING DAVID

On my return to Marsovan, my first duty was to call a meeting of the Armenian leaders and report my interview with the British Ambassador. The promise of Sir Philip Currie to do what he could encouraged us greatly.

Dikran Aryan was not present. I sent word to him to come and see me. They told me that he was absent from the city.

I went to the Ananian home to see Arusag. Her mother told me that she was staying in the house of Major Hakky Bey to nurse his sick wife.

A few days passed quietly. Bekir Pasha arrived in Marsovan in one of his periodical visits. A zaptiah came to inform me that he desired to see me.

When I entered his office he was sitting at his desk writing. He pretended not to see me. He purposely kept me standing, ignoring my presence. I took that as a bad omen. Several minutes later, he raised his head and, as if he saw me for the first time, showed surprise and offered me a chair. He continued writing for a little longer. At last when paper and pen were pushed aside, without the usual civilities, he asked me abruptly:

"You went to Constantinople, did you not?"

"Yes," I answered.

"Whom did you see there? You met your former friends and acquaintances?"

"I did not see many people," I said evasively.

What was he driving at? Did he know the purpose of my journey? Was the whole project betrayed?

The next question made it plain that Bekir knew the whole story.

"Did you not visit the English ambassador while you were there?" he asked. "You were no doubt interested to know the present political condition of the world generally and state of affairs in Turkey particularly."

"Bekir Pasha, I am not a politician," I replied. "I know nothing about the intricacies of international politics."

"Then why did you consult the British Ambassador?" It must be remembered that this was the time when detectives were active everywhere. Probably when I applied for my passport, the authorities had wired to Constantinople to have me watched by them.

More than likely that Sir Philip Currie in talking to the Grand Vizier could not hide the fact that a delegate had arrived from Marsovan to inform him of the precarious condition of that city. After that it was easy for the government to find out who that delegate was. All evidence pointed to me.

Bekir Pasha suddenly changed his tone. His voice sounded harsh and threatening. Pointing his finger at me he shouted: "I am going to shut you up in prison. Let us see if the British Ambassador, or even the Queen of England, can save you from my hands. Ungrateful Armenians! You have lived hundreds of years under the protection of the Ottoman empire; you have eaten to the full the bread of our gracious Sovereign and now you are rising against him."

Angrily ringing the bell on the table, he ordered the policeman who entered, to arrest me. "Take him down," he said.

Here I was for the second time an inmate of a Turkish prison. What had I done this time? I had incurred the displeasure of a despotic Turkish Pasha. I had dared to complain of his unjust treatment of the Armenians. A Christian's duty is to submit, not to criticise. Whatever his rank, he is a despised giaour.

The news of my imprisonment spread in the city like wildfire. The men, who had signed the application to the British Ambassador, lived in hourly dread of arrest. The impression among the people was that my imprisonment was a precursor of a general massacre. The revolutionaries and all the young men began to arm themselves for defense. Some of them even conceived the idea of attacking the prison and taking me out by force. About three hundred men volunteered for this work. The excitement was so great that the Christian businessmen closed their stores and shops and retired to their homes.

The commotion was unusual. The Turkish populace was at a loss. They were uninformed of the inner workings of the situation. They had to be instructed in the act of rising in a

mass and killing their Christian neighbors. They looked up to the government to lead them. Moreover the strength of the revolutionaries was greatly exaggerated in their imagination.

When the report of the excitement in the city reached Bekir Pasha, he realized that he had taken a false step. He had inadvertently forewarned the Armenians of the impending calamity. He changed his tactics immediately. He was not yet ready to carry out the order from the capital. The hour had not yet arrived for action. He decided to let me go this time, waiting for a more auspicious occasion.

Late one evening as Aryan was entering his lodgings, he saw the sharp points of half a dozen bayonets directed against him in the dark. The officer ordered him to surrender. Realizing that resistance was suicidal, he submitted quietly. He was not taken to the city prison. Authorities would not reveal where he was taken.

I went to see Arusag to commiserate with her. She was despondent. The uncertainty was agonizing. If we only knew what had befallen him. We were afraid he was already murdered. I promised to investigate.

As I stood up to leave mother Ananian said, "This city is no longer safe for us. I am thinking of returning to Constantinople."

"Why are you afraid?" I asked. "There is no source of danger for you and your children in this place."

"Yes, there is. Arusag is in trouble."

Arusag blushed and said, "Please don't mother."

"Why not, my dear. The pastor is our spiritual father. He will advise us."

I was looking at Arusag. Her appearance changed noticeably under my gaze. Her face took a belligerent aspect. Her eyes had a faraway look in them.

At last she said. "I am hourly waiting to be arrested and placed in peril of my life. I have wounded a Turkish officer of high rank and killed a private soldier."

I was dumbfounded. Her words more than her appearance astounded me. Was she raving under the loss sustained by the disappearance of Aryan, her dearly beloved fiance?

Presently taking out a small revolver from the folds of her dress, she pressed it against her breasts as a mother would fondle her newly born baby.

"I will not submit to the Turk. I will die fighting," she declared.

"Tell him," her mother admonished her. "Tell him all."

"You have heard that Major Hakky bey had engaged me as a nurse for his sick wife," she began. "They were living in his summer house out in the country, about two miles away from the city. The first few days passed without unusual incident. The patient was getting better. I was respected by every member of the household. The major himself treated me with consideration and encouraged me with gifts. I felt that he was seeking my company rather more than my duties warranted. He was flattering me with lavish words, complimenting my ability as a nurse.

"Last night after attending to the needs of the patient, I was retiring to my room. I saw the major before the door waiting for me. I pretended not to see and tried to pass him. Suddenly, he seized me and took me in his arms. Hakky Bey is a young man and very strong. He asked me in a low voice to go to his room. 'I love you with all my heart and soul, mademoiselle. I am willing to give you anything you desire, if you will submit to me without resistance.'

"I did not show any opposition. Thinking that his proposition was not displeasing to me and that I was going to surrender, he loosened his arms for a moment. Taking advantage of this, I pushed him away with my elbows and gathering all my strength struck him in his face violently with my open hand. Instinctively he took a step backwards. Immediately I entered my room, but before I could close the door he recovered from his surprise and putting his foot inside would not let me shut it. We were measuring our strength. He was endeavoring to open the door, I was pushing it from behind. I do not know how many minutes passed in this struggle. I felt that I could not stand it much longer. He was gaining ground. Suddenly I remembered my revolver which was hidden in my suitcase. Reaching for a chair, not far from me, I put it behind the door and ran for my gun. By the time Hakky Bey removed the obstacles and entered the room, I had already secured my weapon. Pointing it at him, I said, 'I will fire if you take another step.' A mocking smile spread over his face and he answered, 'You are a brave girl, nurse; but do not think that you can escape from my hands. I have no intention of harming you. My purpose is honorable. If you are as conscien-

tious as that, I will call a Hoja, (Mohammedan priest) and we will be married. Do you not wish to be the wife of a major and live a comfortable life?

"Do not advance," I said, "or I will shoot you."

"He was amused and laughed heartily. "Can an Armenian girl use firearms?" he asked mockingly.

"He raised his arms and advanced towards me.

"I did not want to kill him, if I could find a way of escape. but he had determined not to be frustrated. I aimed at his right hand and fired. His arm fell immediately and blood spurted from his hand. He did not shout or call for help. He was looking at his wound with stupefaction, with incredulity. Taking out his handkerchief, he bandaged it. But the noise of the shooting had drawn the attention of the servants. They were asking each other where the noise came from.

"While Hakky Bey was engaged in looking after his wound, I slipped out without being noticed and taking advantage of the darkness outside, opened the front door and disappeared. I was well acquainted with the road leading to the city. I had to reach Marsovan as soon as possible. I was running fast and hardly had gone half a mile when I heard galloping behind me. A horseman was pursuing me. I turned my head and in the dark I saw the major's orderly riding furiously after me.

"The road passed through a wide field. I looked around to see if there was a suitable place to hide. There was none. The soldier had already seen me. He ordered me to stop, otherwise, he said, he would shoot. Suiting the action to the word, he raised the gun and pointed at me. 'If you do not yield, I shall have to take your dead body back to the house. That is my order,' he said.

"I had two alternatives. Either to surrender to the Turk, or save my honour by shooting him. In the latter case, he might kill me before I made a motion. But, I thought, it is easier to die with a gun in one's hand fighting than to be locked in the harem of a licentious Turk and be the plaything of his passion. Self-preservation is a sacred duty, is it not, Pastor?" she asked. "Do you think God will hold me guilty of murder, because I killed a man to save my life and my honour?"

"No, no," I answered. Go on and tell me all." I was carried away by her charms. I was fascinated by her courageous spirit.

"It was evident that the soldier did not expect any resistance from me," she continued. Especially when he saw me stand still, He thought I was ready to submit, and lowered his rifle. I waited until he approached me about fifty feet. Quickly I drew my revolver and fired. The horse was startled and began to run. I saw that I had not missed. The soldier was dragged along by one foot caught in the stirrup. After a while the animal stopped. I went to him. The man was already dead. I disengaged his foot and leaping on the horse, galloped towards the city. Near the outskirts, I turned the horse loose and drove him back to the summer house."

Arusag was silent. She did not feel sorry for what she had done. There was no expression of repentance; on the contrary satisfaction was reflected on her countenance for a difficult duty well done. An iron will shone forth from her eyes. A fearless daring enveloped her whole being.

I had no word to utter. Rising I offered a short prayer, committing this brave girl into the hands of Almighty God, asked Him to defend and preserve our helpless and persecuted people, I left the house with wet eyes..

Arusag had long silky hair. She cut it short and putting on man's clothing, she left Marsovan with her mother and brother. No one knew where they went.

Hakky Bey was silent. He thought it wise not to take action at the present time. To permit it to be known that an Armenian girl had frustrated his designs by shooting him and escaping, was extremely humiliating and disgraceful to his military self respect. He would be a laughing stock before his brother officers. Concequently, he abstained from pursuing the culprit, but swore eternal vengeance against the Armenian nation generally, and Arusag Ananian in particular.

For the present, at any rate, the Ananian family was out of danger.

CHAPTER NINE

I AM AGAIN IMPRISONED

*To sorrow
I bade good-morrow
And thought to leave her far away behind;
But cheerly, cheerly,
She loves me dearly,
She is so constant to me and so kind.*

KEATS

The Turkish authorities in Marsovan did not regard Anatolia College with favour. The officials considered it the breeding place for revolutionary ideas. Was it not there that the two professors were discovered propagating rebellious notions among the young students. In spite of some of the American missionaries who endeavored to win the friendship and the good will of the Turks, the Government employed every means to hinder their educational work. Bekir Pasha had several times applied to the Central Government in Constantinople to get a warrant to close the doors of that institution, and those higher up would gladly have granted his request but the occasion was not auspicious. The European ambassadors were already stirred up and were demanding from the Sublime Porte the reformation of the six Armenian vilayets. The American ambassador had taken a neutral position in this matter, and the sly Abdul Hamid did not want to have another added to his many enemies. He was trying his hand at the old policy of antagonizing one state against another and sowing seeds of jealousy among them.

The sentiments of the members of the faculty towards the revolutionary activities varied; some were in favour and others against the movement. Among the Armenian professors there were those who sympathized heartily with the revolutionaries; but restrained from showing their feelings openly for fear of drawing suspicion upon the college.

Rev. C. C. Tracy, D. D., the president of the college, did not say much about the matter, but one could sense that he was a sincere friend of our nation, and felt deeply for our troubles. He spoke Armenian perfectly and had translated many hymns from the English. Dr. Smith was an old gentleman and had spent almost his entire life in the country and knew what the Turks were. But he would not antagonize them in word or deed.

There was only one man, Mr. Dicks, a convinced turcophile, who condemned the revolution bitterly. He spoke Turkish like a native and threatened to turn over to the police any of the students who dared to participate in the movement. In spite of his close contact with the Turks, he did not understand the Turkish mentality. He thought they were his friends, but all the same they did not spare him. They deported him from the country when they had a chance.

One day I had a conversation with Mr. Dicks. He blamed me for my sympathy with the revolutionaries. "You approve of all their acts of rebellion, lawlessness and violence," he accused me.

"You are mistaken, Mr. Dicks," I said. "I do not approve of their acts of violence and I tell them so. But I will admit I am in full sympathy with the Revolution, if you would use that word as a synonym for patriotism. You are right in thinking that I am a lover of my country and nation."

"But you are not a nation," he declared. "You are merely a people. Turkey is a nation. England is a nation. Where is your country? Where is your government?"

These unreasonable statements stirred my indignation, but controlling myself, I answered:

"We have a country, which is called Armenia, although foreigners rule it. If you have forgotten your geography, I would suggest that you procure one and study it more carefully."

"But I do not see the name Armenia on the maps," he said. "Where the Turkish boundary ends, Russian territory begins."

"Yes," I answered. "The Turks and their friends have wiped out the name of Armenia from the maps that are to be used in this country, but Armenia exists, and will continue to exist, until one day she will take her place in the ranks of the nations."

"You are dreaming, my friend. The Armenians will never win freedom. This revolutionary movement is foolish. How can you, a handful of people, fight against an organized and well equipped army. which is regarded with respect even by the European military authorities! How can a few dozen young men, ignorant of the science of war, without arms and ammunition, expect to be successful in their demand for inde-

pendence! Any person with a little intelligence could see that this is an impossibility."

"You reveal, by your words, that you are uninformed about our aims in this agitation. We are not demanding independence, although there a few radicals, who go as far as that. The thinking and the more serious-minded class of our people simply desire not to be deprived of the common privileges of life to which we are entitled by divine right. To live as other peoples live—to enjoy the safety of life and property, to have at our disposal the fruits of our labour, to be recognized before the law as human beings, to be protected against the unruly Kurds and Circassians, to be unhampered in our progress mentally and morally. We do not intend to sever our connection with the Turkish government. We ask for the improvement of existing conditions. Do you not think that we need it?"

"No, I do not," he answered. "I have lived many years in this city and in other cities. I have never seen any persecution against the Armenians. Until recently Moslems and Christians lived together peaceably. It is those few young, headstrong, shortsighted revolutionaries who have stirred up trouble."

"Here again you are mistaken. The revolution is the outcome of unendurable oppression. Long before these young men organized themselves into a secret society, our national headquarters in Constantinople tried to remedy the sad state of affairs. As faithful subjects, they first petitioned the government for protection. Not finding relief from that source, they turned their attention to the European states and appealed to the Great Powers. Witness the Berlin Treaty and the Cyprus Convention. There also the promises of reformation did not go beyond the papers on which they were written.

"Mr. Dicks, you must have travelled through this country; you must have witnessed how some of the villagers are plundered and robbed; you must have met those Kurdish chieftains who inhabit the fastnesses of the mountains of Armenia. They plague the farmers about them. They descend periodically upon the villagers and carry away flocks of sheep and herds of cattle, often women and children. Nobody is safe from their incursion. Cases are on record indicating that even American missionaries have not been immune from their attacks. You have been in the country long enough to know all these things.

I do not know why you should close your eyes against them. It is true, as you say, that we are not able to stand alone against the Turkish government, but we are earnestly hoping that the Christian nations of Europe will help us in time of need."

"I am afraid you will be disappointed in that," he said.

"European governments will not help you. They consider their national interests above everything else. For a concession from the Sultan, they will sacrifice a whole nation."

"But why then even now, the ambassadors are united in demanding from the Sublime Porte, the reformation of the six Armenian vilayets? Do you not think that they will succeed? Would it not help you in your missionary work? You will have a free field in which to work unhampered by any restrictions. You Americans should be more in sympathy with our cause considering that you also fought for your rights; although you did not have one-hundredth part of the injustice that we are suffering from."

At that moment the servant entered and told Mr. Dicks that there was a soldier outside who wanted to see him. He went out. A minute later he came back and excused himself, as, he said, Bekir Pasha had sent for him. As he departed, he warned me to be careful and to go about my work circumspectly.

There was an Armenian official in the telegraph department, who was in secret agreement with the Committee of the Revolutionary Party and who communicated to them the important news from Constantinople. In this way they knew all that was passing between the Central Government and Bekir Pasha. They were aware that the ambassadors had not given up the idea of the reformation and were still pressing hard for its execution upon the Sublime Porte. They were all working harmoniously together, except the Russian ambassador, whose government evidently did not relish the idea of a reformed Armenia between her armies and the Turkish territories. But in spite of him the plan was prepared and approved and the signature of the Sultan was awaited.

One evening as I was returning from my pastoral visitations, I saw two policemen standing outside my door. When I approached one of them, putting his hand on my shoulder, said, "Kaimakam Bey wants to see you. He is waiting in his office." I knew at once that I was arrested. This was the third time

that I was apprehended. Experience had taught me the Turkish method. When a policeman puts his hand on your shoulder or arm, that means that you are a prisoner. Resistance is useless. One has to submit.

"What?" I asked. "Is the Kaimakam still in his office at this late hour?"

"Yes," he answered. "He stayed there specially to meet you. Come with us at once," and he pressed my shoulder a little harder.

They took me between them and marched me off. After walking a few steps I remembered that my servant did not know where I was going. I stopped and told the men what I intended to do. "It would not be necessary," one of them said. "You will not be detained very long."

I perceived that the situation was serious. I had no choice but to follow.

The Chief of Police received me indifferently. To my question of where the Kaimakam was, he answered that he had gone home. "Can you tell me why he wishes to see me?"

"Sit down for a few minutes and you will know."

After waiting for about half an hour, he called in a policeman and ordered him to search me. The man put his hand in my pockets and brought out all the papers that I had. The Chief told him to let them alone. "Look only for weapons," he said. Then turning to me he added, "You are a prisoner."

"With what misdeed am I charged?" I asked.

"You will know later."

"By whose orders am I arrested?"

"The order comes from higher up," he answered.

I was led to prison.

It was a big barn-like room, where between forty to fifty prisoners were confined. The air was vitiated. A nauseating odor permeated the atmosphere. Some of the prisoners were sitting on the floor; others had stretched themselves on a piece of matting. They all looked poorly dressed and dirty. I glanced around to see if there were any Armenians. They were all Turks, belonging to the lower class of the population of the town, who had been jailed for minor offenses.

My entrance did not attract any attention. One or two looked around and saw me, and then turned back to their conversation.

Finding a corner, I sat down and leaned my head against

the wall. Nobody knew what had happened or where I was. My servant, no doubt, had my supper ready and was waiting for me. I did not feel hungry. I was thinking of the future: what was going to happen? With what crime would they charge me? It was evident that Bekir had succeeded in his endeavor to get rid of me. He must have made a strong case against me. What sort of a report had he sent to Constantinople to get permission for my arrest? All was dark.

I reviewed the line of conduct that I had followed since my arrival in Marsovan, to see if there was anything to incriminate me. All my principal activities passed before my mind. I could find nothing worthy of arrest and imprisonment. My visit with the British ambassador had undoubtedly enraged the Turkish authorities, but surely they would not and could not convict me as a traitor for having reported our precarious situation to the representative of a friendly government, who under treaty obligation, has a right to know. That could not be brought against me openly during my trial. Some other excuse must be invented to do away with me.

What about my sermons? I remembered that I had used some expressions in which unfavorable reference was made to the Turkish army. I had publicly charged the regular soldiers with having taken part in the massacre of Sassoon, in which helpless men, women and children were done to death without mercy. I had called their behavior barbarous and inhuman. Did not the reports of the foreign consul state the same?

My relationship with the Turkish officials had been frank and free, without any obsequiousness, without paying court to them. On several occasions my friends had warned me against too much freedom of speech, but I could not see any reason for changing my mode of conduct.

I was not a member of the revolutionary party, but it was not a secret that I was in sympathy with the movement.

The conversation with our missionary friend was still fresh in my mind. I wondered if he knew of the danger that was hanging over my head. He was intimate with the governor. Perhaps words had passed between them about me. Was his testimony good or bad?—Favorable or against me? It might even be possible that, in order to get into the good graces of Bekir Pasha and secure his friendship for the college, he would acquiesce in my condemnation.

I wondered who will preach in my place Sunday?

I imagined the congregation gathered together in groups outside the church after the service conversing. The young people would sympathize with me and show signs of uneasiness. The older and more conservative men would be glad, but they would not dare to express their feelings. They did not want any change. They were mostly commercial men, satisfied with their condition, doing good business with their Turkish neighbors. . . What if Christians in other parts of the country were suffering untold wrongs! What if they themselves were sometimes robbed by the ruling class! They could make more money by enduring silently than by complaining. From the beginning these men were unfriendly towards the revolution, although they did not run counter to it openly. For them all the revolutionaries were undesirables, disturbers of the peace.

With these speculations still in my mind, I must have dozed. Suddenly I was awakened by the noise of the opening of the prison door. It was about midnight. I saw a policeman enter. He came straight to me. He told me to go with him. "Where?" I asked.

"To the Office," he answered. "The Chief is waiting for you."

"What has the Chief to do with me at this late hour?"

"I do not know. He wants to see you."

"I cannot go now. I am tired and sleepy. I want to rest," I said.

It was not unheard of that in Turkey sometimes an undesirable prisoner would be taken out of his confinement, at night, and destroyed secretly and all traces of him obliterated before his friends were aware of it. It seemed to me as if this was to be my fate also. Had not Bekir Pasha already threatened my life by saying that he could have me assassinated at any time by his sycophants, if he could not harm me within the law?

"Then you disobey an officer and resist the government?"

I was thinking that if they were going to slay me, let them do so here, in this prison, in the presence of this crowd. At least they could not keep it a secret and pretend to my friends that they know nothing about me. If I am going to die, I would have the whole world know that I was murdered in

a government institution, without a legal trial and without a regular conviction.

"I do not resist the government," I said. "At this time of night there is no judge and no court session for a trial. The Chief of Police can wait until tomorrow morning. I am with- in my rights in not complying with his illegal summons. As soon as the day breaks, my first act will be, to go to the Kaim- akam and protest against this unjust treatment."

"I will take you by force," he said.

"Then I will resist," I answered.

He took hold of my arm to raise me. I pushed his hand away. During this altercation all the inmates of the place were awakened and were watching us. That was exactly what I wanted, to have many witnesses.

The policeman, on second thought, remembered that, he had no order to use force. Not wishing to put himself under any responsibility, he left me and departed, but I knew that the drama had not come to an end. A few minutes later the door was once more opened and the Chief himself appeared, with two soldiers following. The Chief spoke not unkindly: "Mr. Preacher, I see that you are laboring under a misapprehension. You will in no way be harmed. I will tell you what the government has resolved to do with your case. It is decided that you should leave this place. There is nothing more than that. Do you not wish to return to Ourfa, your native town?"

"Are you sending me to Ourfa?" I asked.

"Yes," he answered.

"Why?"

"An order has come from Constantinople for all strangers to be sent back to their birthplaces."

"I know that," I said. "But the order is only for tramps without employment. You surely do not class me in that category. I am not without occupation. I have my church, my congregation. I hold a position in Marsovan."

"Yes, that is so," he conceded, "but the local government thinks it wise for you to be away from this city. I advise you not to resist. Opposition is futile and may open a door to more serious consequences."

I had to think fast. Here was the situation. It was possible that what he said was true. Knowing the influence that I exercised upon the youth of Marsovan, the government con-

sidered me as a thorn in the flesh, and therefore desired my absence from the city. On the other hand he might be telling me a lie. He might be putting a good face upon the matter, until he got me out of this crowd, and then execute his intention. In any case I was impotent. Every way I turned I saw danger. Resistance would end my life there and then. Submission would postpone that possibility. The only ray of light lay in that direction. It may be that it was not their purpose to kill me. Better to avoid providing an excuse for it. I concluded in my mind that if there was any hope at all, and that very meagre, it was in obeying him.

"How shall I travel?" I asked.

"The government has made the necessary arrangements for that. There is a carriage waiting for you outside. Soldiers will accompany you as far as the next town. From there on you will be under the safe conduct of officers, until you reach your destination."

"But I have made no preparation for this long journey," I said. "I have no money to buy food."

"Your escort will take care of whatever you need."

"Can I write a letter to the officials of my church and let them know where I have gone? No one knows of my arrest and imprisonment."

"Yes, you can write a letter and it will be delivered to whomever it is addressed."

I wrote on a piece of paper briefly, that I was being sent to Ourfa in military custody, and addressed it to Mr. Ghazaros Nerso, a teacher in the college, and a member of the Board of Trustees of the church, who resided within the college grounds. I thought that there would be less danger in corresponding with a person, who lived in the immediate vicinity of the American missionaries. The note reached its destination, but my friends could not believe that the Turks will keep me alive until the end of my journey.

Led by the Chief of Police, I went to the street. There was a carriage standing at the curb. Four soldiers were guarding it. I entered the carriage. The driver cracked his whip. The horses started at a gallop. Two horsemen leading and two following. . The streets were dark and deserted. The carriage was bouncing up and down on the uneven cobble stones.

I offered a silent prayer from the bottom of my heart and committed myself to the will of the Almighty God. I felt better then.

At the outskirts of the town, two of the soldiers turned back.

Until morning we travelled steadily without stopping. At the break of day the carriage came to a standstill and the soldiers dismounted. They spread their small rugs on the ground turned their faces towards Mecca and went through certain prescribed motions, bending, kneeling, touching the ground with the forehead and repeating the formula of prayers. "God is great. There is no God but Allah. Mohammed is the prophet of God." Mohammedan prayers are composed mostly of thanksgiving and praise, with few petitions. They must be recited five times a day—at dawn, midday, four o'clock, sunset and after dark.

I was watching the soldiers in their various postures, praying. I felt a yearning in my heart to approach and tell them about Christ, to reveal to them the truth of the Christian Religion, but I dared not. I was a prisoner. They were my guardians. Besides in Turkey no Christian is allowed to speak to a Moslem about Christianity.

I too got out of the carriage and began walking about to give a little exercise to my cramped legs.

When they finished their devotions, they produced food—bread and cheese and olives—and invited me to share it with them. I had no desire to eat, but to refuse would have been ill-mannered. Especially to win their comradeship, I sat down with them and took part in the meal.

Hope gradually rekindled in me. At the beginning the thought was uppermost in my mind that they were taking me out of town to a sequestered place to kill me. As the time went on and the night wore out, with the morning light my spirits also revived. I spoke to the men in a friendly way. I tried to win their good will. My life depended upon their attitude towards me.

"Where are you taking me?" I asked. The same question I had asked during the night, but to which I had received no answer. Their stony silence had increased my apprehension, but now they seemed disposed to talk.

"We are taking you to Chorum, the next town. We leave

you there. Beyond that we know nothing," answered one of my guards.

On the same day, at sunset, we arrived in Chorum. It was a town mainly populated by Turks. Only a few Christians lived there.

I spent the night in the prison.

On the following day I was sent away in the company of one horseman, a zaptiah. After traveling two consecutive days we arrived in Yozghat.

Yozghat was a medium-sized town in the interior of Turkey. It had a mixed population, Armenians and Turks. The prevailing language was Turkish, even among the Armenians. Perhaps on account of that, the revolutionary activity could not find a stronghold in Yozghat. There was, however, a commodious prison house, where the political prisoners of the surrounding country were confined. The town was notorious among the revolutionaries, as the place, where about half a dozen comrades had been executed. There was one especially, a great leader, famous for his noble and virtuous character, a promising young man, who would have done credit to any nation, who was hanged by the Turkish government without sufficient cause. His real name was Aramian, but he was popularly known as "Morook" (beard) because of his thick black whiskers, which he kept always trimmed and tidy. The Turks told me that his grave had become a sort of sanctuary, where the old women of the town went to pray.

The Armenian prisoners saw me from a distance, when I arrived under guard at the government house. A short time later I received a note, by a secret agent, from one of them, who was an old friend of mine, a school mate. I had heard that he was imprisoned, but did not know where he was. Looking out of the window, he had seen and recognized me. He was writing to commiserate with me. I answered him giving the good news of the Ambassadors' plan of reformation of the six Armenian vilayets. When that is adopted, I told him, we shall all be set free.

There was an American missionary, Dr. Dodd, a physician, residing in Yozghat at that time, with whom I was acquainted. I sent word to him asking him to come and see me at the police department where I was kept. When he arrived I was led to a room, where a number of leading Turks had

gathered, consulting about the political situation. The subject of deliberation was the reformation of the six provinces. They openly showed their opposition to it. They were blaming the Armenians for the troubles in the country. They did not disguise their hostile and threatening attitude. Dr. Dodd told me afterwards that the Mohammedan population is stirred up because of the coercion exercised on their sovereign and is threatening to rise and to massacre all the Christians. He is afraid, he said, this thing would kindle a general conflagration in the already excited condition of the populace.

I asked him to use his influence to obtain my release. He advised me to wait a little longer. It is not a convenient time to ask favours from the authorities. They are very sensitive about the activities of the foreigners. Everything is in chaos. He informed that the government had already changed its original intention concerning my case. Instead of sending me to Erzingan, to the military headquarters of the fifth army, to be tried there by court martial, they have directed my course towards Sivas, to wait there until the outcome of the proceedings in Constantinople.

I could not sleep that night. The spectre of the court martial and of the gallows was before my mind. What a hair-breadth escape from death! For what treasonable act had they accused me that I should be tried by the highest military tribunal? The sentence would have been "guilty" without a doubt. I remembered previous trials when the accused, without exception, were condemned to die. I felt sure that they would not only have condemned me, whether I was guilty or not, but would immediately have carried out the sentence before my friends had a chance to intervene.

I arrived in Sivas, however, safely, and was an inmate of the Central prison there.

CHAPTER TEN

THE CENTRAL PRISON OF SIVAS

*This truth came borne with bier and pall,
I felt it, when I sorrowed most,
'Tis better to have loved and lost,
Than never to have loved at all—*

TENNYSON

It was a large two story building with barn-like apartments for living quarters. On one side of the courtyard a pool of running water served as a bath. The prison housed about two hundred inmates.

My room was on the second floor. A window next to the door opened on a wooden balcony. At the back of the room, near the ceiling, a small aperture with strong iron bars admitted the day light. It was devoid of any furniture, except a piece of matting and a small chair without a back.

Along the balcony there were cells for incommunicado prisoners. Although I belonged to this class, yet my door was left unlocked in consideration for my profession.

The ration was an earthen jar of water and a loaf of dark bread, twice a day. The first night I suffered from the bitter cold, having no covering. When the jailer came to bring bread and water, I asked him to buy a small mangal (charcoal brazier) and some fuel; also tea, sugar and a tea-pot. I gave him the few piasters left in my pocket.

The hot tea and the charcoal fire revived me.

Later in the day the head jailer—they called him the governor of the prison—came to see me. He was a thick set, strong looking man, and about fifty years of age. He had a gruff voice and spoke roughly with the prisoners. He treated me courteously, however, and asked if I wanted anything. I told him that I should like to see Mr. Perry, the American missionary. Hasan effendi promised to let him know.

When Mr. Perry arrived a jailer led me to the office of the prison house where he was waiting. We had never met before. He was a typical American gentleman, with a kindly face and refined manner. He said he had heard of my arrest and imprisonment, but did not know that I was in the city of Sivas. What had I done to draw suspicion on me? I said the whole thing was a mistake and based on a misunderstanding. Could he intercede with the Vali for my release? He said

he would do so, but his gloomy appearance did not inspire me with hope. At the same time I should like to have a mattress and blankets, if it is not against the prison regulations. He asked the officials and received no objection. At parting I requested him to lend me a Bible. He did not promise, afraid that I would not be permitted to have books in my possession.

On the same day, towards evening, the janitor of the local Armenian Evangelical Church, brought the desired articles. I was called down to receive them. From a distance, behind the barred gate of the main entrance, he saw me, and when he handed the mattress to the door keeper, he held one corner and shook it, with an expressive meaning. Evidently there was something hidden in it.

In the privacy of my room, I opened that corner and found a small pocket New Testament. What a welcome gift! It gave me as much joy as a spring of cold water to a man dying of thirst in the wilderness. It was a sedative to a suffering man from a painful malady. Let others think what they may, that little volume was to me an inexhaustable source of consolation, encouragement and inner peace. I greedily devoured its contents. The familiar verses revealed themselves in a new light. I read it many times from end to end. My favorite passages disclosed wonderful meaning under the stress of incarceration. I took my stand on the promises of God challenging Him to fulfill them in my case. In times of dejection I recited aloud reassuring sentences such as: "I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee. So that with good courage I say, the Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what shall man do unto me?" St. Paul must have been in similar circumstances when he wrote, "I am pressed on every side, yet not strained; perplexed, yet not unto despair; pursued, yet not forsaken; smitten down, yet not destroyed."

It is wonderful how much comfort and spiritual strength one could derive from such passages as; "We know that to them that love God all things work together for good," or "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom he received."

I had known in the past the comfort that prayer bestows upon the believer, but had never experienced the consciousness of the power that can transport and elevate the soul. Believe me, every time I knelt down to pray, the nearness of God was

perceptible, with renewed strength to bear. All my troubles slipped away. It was easy to understand how the great Apostle could write to his congregation to rejoice under similar circumstances.

The good people of the church continued sending food every day on a tray. In order to keep his friendship, I always invited Hasan Effendi to share the meal with me.

One day he informed that a sum of six Turkish pounds had arrived for me from Marsovan, which he was keeping in his safe. "Whenever you need money I will give it to you in small amounts. It is not safe to carry such a large sum on your person." The news was encouraging.

To spend the time I frequently went out on the balcony and, leaning against the rail, watched the prisoners below. On one occasion a familiar figure in the crowd drew my attention. Although the man's back was turned to me, his square shoulders, powerful neck and proud carriage, could not escape my recognition: It was Aryan. He was talking intimately with a giant fellow like himself. Bending forward to command a better view, I was staring at him with concentrated attention, when he turned my way and began walking with his companion. As if conscious that some one was gazing at him, he looked up suddenly. His penetrating eyes flashed. A slight smile of understanding spread over his face, but did not betray himself and continued his promenading.

Finding a small piece of paper I wrote on it: "The sky is darkened, but a ray of light appears through the clouds." Rolling the paper in the shape of a cigarette, I waited. Just as he was passing the balcony, I made a slight tapping sound with my foot and dropped it in front of him. He picked up the cigarette, put it in his mouth and went his way.

In the evening, the Kurdish prisoner, who was employed to assist the jailers, brought my ration and taking a cigarette from behind his ear, offered it to me. The message read: "The patient is on his way to recovery under the care of an able nurse." The meaning was plain. Arusag was in the city and planning Aryan's delivery.

This was how it had come about.

After leaving Marsovan, Arusag had come to Sivas and settled down there. She had changed her disguise of man's clothing and put on the dress of a nurse. She assumed a Greek name, Sophy Papadopoulos. As a certified nurse from England,

she applied to the doctors of the city for employment. Speaking the Greek language like her native tongue, she went to see the government physician, who was a Greek by nationality. He was glad to meet a compatriot and promised to help her. Soon after a favourable opportunity presented itself. The Vali, Jemil Pasha, was looking for a private tutor for his twelve year old daughter. He asked Dr. Theopilus if he knew of one suitable for this position. "Yes, Your Excellency," he replied. "I know just the right person that will answer your purpose perfectly. She is a young Greek lady, a nurse by profession, highly educated and speaks several languages. She has recently come from England and is seeking employment. She will be able not only to teach your daughter what you desire, but will also superintend her health. She is an accomplished piano player."

"Why, that is the person I want," said the Vali. "Since I had that piano sent to me from Constantinople, no one has been able to play it properly. What is this young woman's name?"

"Mademoiselle Sophy Papadopoulos."

"Doctor, will you bring her to see me?"

"I will do that, Your Excellency."

The governor was fascinated with the appearance and the comportment of Arusag when she was presented to him by Dr. Theopilus. He engaged her at once with a generous remuneration. The pupil also, Jemilah Hanum, was enraptured with her and they lost no time in becoming fast friends.

Arusag was glad for this position. She thought that by serving the Vali faithfully and well, she would acquire influence with him and try indirectly to help the national cause. She made herself agreeable to all the inmates of the house. The women adored her and looked upon her as a superior creature. There were about a dozen of them—the governor's wives and concubines. When she gave a piano lesson to Jemilah, they gathered around her and listened admiringly. They asked her to play Turkish tunes: They liked them better than the European music. She accomodated them obligingly.

Investigating the whole residence she made herself acquainted with every part of it for emergency. There was a small room next to the private office of the governor, which was separated from it by a wooden wall, the upper part being left open. Every time he had a consultation with his officials,

Arusag went to that small room and heard all that passed between them.

One day the superintendent of prisons in reporting to the Vali, mentioned the name Levon, a leader of a band of revolutionaries, who was detained in the Central Prison, awaiting his trial, Arusag's heart gave a sudden leap. She had discovered at last where her beloved was. She rejoiced that he was alive. After that she turned all her attention to find a way for his release.

The question was how to proceed. Jemil Pasha respected her highly because of the good care of his daughter, but she did not dare to ask him for Aryan's release. Being known as a Greek woman, she could not show interest in an Armenian, without drawing suspicion upon herself. The discovery of her deception would endanger both their lives. However, she must find some way to achieve her purpose.

First of all it was necessary to let Aryan know that she was in the city and ready to help him. She told her mother to cook dolma, a kind of stuffed squash popular among the Armenians. In one of them she put a piece of paper with these words: "The child that fell in the sea must be saved." With the points of a fork, she inscribed on the outside of the squash the capital letter "D". She sent the dish of food thus prepared to the prison to be given to a man by the name Levon.

When Aryan received the plate of food, he, at first could not understand the meaning. Nobody in Sivas knew him, not even the revolutionaries had heard of his arrival, to the best of his knowledge. Who could be the person or persons to send him food? It occurred suddenly to him that there must be a message in it. Handling the dish carefully he examined each squash turning it over until he caught sight of the letter D. Opening the dolma cautiously he found the scrap of paper. He stared at it with wonder. The handwriting was Arusag's; she had followed him and was planning his release. This discovery cheered him. He did not know how she could accomplish such a difficult undertaking, but he had confidence in her resourcefulness. He had no way of replying and had to wait for another communication to know what his part in this adventure was to be. Not long after he received the details of her project.

Next to my room there was a cell where a young man served his time under lock and key. I had seen him often pas-

sing my window in company of a jailer, going to the lavatory, morning and evening, without having a chance to speak to him. Every time he passed he turned his head and looked at me silently. We were separated from each other by a thin wall.

One day I heard three taps on the wall. I answered it in the same manner. He began talking in a low voice. I could not understand what he said. He went to the corner where the two walls met. The wooden partition had shrunk and left a crack. When he spoke again I could hear him.

"Who are you?" asked the voice.

I told him.

"The preacher of Marsovan?"

"Yes, how do you know?"

"I have heard about you."

"And who are you?" I asked in turn.

"My name is Chukhchik." (Bat)

"That is not a real name. What is your surname?"

After a little hesitation, he said: "When I joined the revolutionary party, I laid aside my name and surname. I am known among my comrades by Chukhchik."

Evidently he did not want to reveal his identity. Probably he was the son of a prominent family whom he was careful not to implicate.

"What are the charges against you?" he asked again.

"No specific charges as far as I know. Nowadays every Armenian is suspected. There is no distinction between the guilty and the innocent. . . . It is enough that a man's name ends in 'ian'. He is a rebel. The government considers only those loyal who would betray their countrymen. All outstanding men are under suspicion."

"Yes, that is so," he said. "I am sorry for you."

Here was no more than a boy yet he forgot his own troubles to commiserate with me. My heart went out to him with affection. I found consolation in the knowledge that some one sympathized with me.

Chukhchik was about 24 or 25 years old. Slight in build, with fiery black eyes and quick movements. One could not but like his frank open face. He was uneducated.

"Chukhchik," I asked, "for what cause were you arrested?"

"I am a terrorist."

"What did you say?"

"I am a terrorist," he repeated, putting a proud emphasis on the word.

"Do the police know?"

"Yes. I was caught in my second engagement."

"Second? Do you mean to say that you had already killed a man when you were caught in your second attempt?"

"Yes," he said calmly.

"You actually murdered him?"

"Of course."

I sat down, My knees could no longer support my weight. I was no more in a mood to talk. I wanted to think. This simple minded and lovable young fellow had committed a crime; had shed the blood of a fellow being, and yet did not feel compunction. His conscience did not trouble him. He was talking of the most heinous crime a man can perpetrate, as if it were an ordinary, every-day act. More than that, he had the feeling of satisfaction of a man, who had successfully performed a difficult duty, no matter if it resulted in his arrest and imprisonment and cost him his life.

The question rose in my mind: who is responsible for this abnormality? Is an act of terrorism murder, or the just punishment of a traitor? Is it justifiable from a moral point of view? If it is murder, then it is sin. "Thou shalt not kill," says the Book. If it is a penalty visited upon the malefactor, who is the judge? Who is to decide his execution? This boy in the next cell cannot be held accountable for the deed; he simply obeyed an order, as he considers, from a higher authority. Then the Executive Committee of the Revolutionary Party must bear the brunt of responsibility. Could the men who constitute it claim that they have as much right to put a traitor to death as a government has in hanging the man who deliberately betrays his country? Could the supremacy of purpose, the superiority of national interests vindicate this action?

The accuracy of reasoning followed by the revolutionaries could not stand the test of ethical science. What would Christ say? We have a concrete example in His life. He was betrayed by Judas. Although the end of the traitor was tragic yet Jesus had no part in his death. He only pointed him out as a renegade and as such he was disgraced and exposed to the contempt and aversion of his fellow disciples. The degradation

was so severe that it led him to the termination of his life. Moral death resulted in physical dissolution.

Another time, as if conjecturing the battle raging in my mind, Chukhchik asked: "Is it sinful to put a traitor to death?"

"My boy, the Bible says 'No murderer has eternal life abiding in him.' As Christians we should obey the law of God."

"But the Committee decreed and the lot fell on me. I had to execute the judgement. To obey is one of the duties of a devotee to the national cause. Is it not so?"

If the Committee had the authority of a court of justice and a legal trial had taken place; if the opportunity was given to the accused to defend himself, and by undeniable proof the crime was established, then the matter would be different. Under the present circumstances it is advisable to follow the example of the Master.

"I heard you praying in the night," he said. "I have never prayed in all my life."

"Why don't you pray?"

"I do not know how."

"You know the Lord's prayer?"

"No I do not."

"Then I will teach you."

On the following days, as soon as we were awake, we retired to the corner and I taught him the Lord's prayer. Besides repeating this prayer every day, I told him he should pray in his own words. "If you have any thing in your mind, any trouble and anxiety, take it to God in prayer. Any need that you feel in your heart, ask God to supply it. You would be greatly comforted. Prayer gives us strength to bear our trials with more patience. God is our Father. He hears us when we pray. I draw much consolation from my prayers."

The reading of the Bible, the conversation with Chukhchik and watching the prisoners down below in the courtyard, occupied my time and partly alleviated the tediousness of imprisonment. The good people of the church never missed sending me food every day. My relationship with the head jailer was good. I was waiting and hoping soon to be released through the intercession of Mr. Perry, or, at least, to be called to trial. The uncertainty of the future was painful. What would be the charge against me? If I knew, I could prepare a defense

accordingly. What worried me was that they would convict me on a trumped-up charge without a chance of vindication.

Communication with the outside world was cut off altogether. I did not know what was going on beyond the prison walls. Mr. Perry's visits did not enlighten me. To all questions he turned a deaf ear, with a sad and dejected expression, from which one could easily gather that the country was passing through troublesome times. Evidently the plan of reformation for the six vilayets had failed, otherwise I would have heard.

From the scraps of news that Aryan slipped through, I learned that the Armenians of the city of Trebizond were massacred. This was done without any provocation. The Armenians were few and far apart in that locality and the revolutionary activities hardly noticeable among them. Abd-ul-Hamid encouraged by the discord and dissension among the European ambassadors, concerning this complicated question, had decided to take the matter into his own hand and to solve the difficulty by destroying the subject of the dispute. When the Christian population could be reduced to almost non-existence, their friends would find themselves before an accomplished fact and desist from interfering in his internal affairs. The terror of blood and fire began to spread from city to city all over the country.

I could see Aryan every day. He would sometimes stop, in his walks with another Armenian prisoner, under the balcony where I stood and talk to his companion in tones loud enough for me to hear, and in this way would transmit all the news he had. His information he gleaned from the Turk with whom he was intimate. Osman, the son of Ahmed, had been the leader of a band of robbers, holding up travellers on the highways. During the fight he had killed a zaptiah and was caught red handed.

The Kurdish prisoner, who assisted the jailers, was bribed by Aryan. He transferred messages between us. One day he brought a letter to Chukhchik. Another time the Kurd gave him a pocket knife. There was something in the air. I noticed that he was occupied in his cell. Several times on my giving the usual sign rapping on the wall, he did not respond immediately. The sound of jumping down from a chair could be heard.

"What are you doing," I asked once.

"Nothing. Just standing on my chair and looking outside through the window."

There was no harm in that. I was in the habit of doing the same thing myself.

The scenery outside was really beautiful. Looking through the small aperture the prospect enchanted me. The peaks of the hills succeeding each other could be seen in the distance, glowing brightly with the rays of the sun. Below, in the valleys, the vineyards and orchards were painted gorgeous yellow and red by an autumn touch. The air was clear; the sunshine felt warm. In the open all nature was calm and peaceful. I would stand watching by the hour fascinated by the view. To be on those hills free and unhindered, to go where you wanted unrestrained . . . what a boon! One does not realize the value of freedom until deprived of it. The difference between captivity and liberty cannot be understood until one has actually gone through the experience. Freedom is a great privilege, a priceless possession. Falling in battle fighting for a sacred cause is honourable, but to be shut in a small cell awaiting an unknown future is intolerable. I appreciated Patrick Henry's great speech before the Revolutionary Congress in Virginia, closing with the words—"Is life so dear or peace so sweet as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty or give me death."

One night I was suddenly aroused by a noise from the next room. A shower of small stones and dirt had awakened me. The door of the cell gently opened and shut again. Two men were talking in whispers. I put my ear to the crack in the wall and heard Chukhchik say: "The big stone is moving; you are stronger than I am; take it down."

The other person never spoke. Only the creaking of the chair under his weight could be heard. He came down like a man carrying a heavy load. There was no doubt. The young fellow is attempting to escape with the assistance of another man, by enlarging the opening of the window. It flashed in my mind that it must be Aryan. He had been in communication with Chukhchik and had planned for this. Now they were removing the iron bars from the aperture.

A small stone fell in the street. Something was thrown up to the window. It must have been the end of a cord. Aryan

putting his hand out tried to catch it. He did not succeed. The second time he failed again. He caught it the third time. At the same instant the report of a gun reverberated in the street with an answering pistol shot. Firing continued for a few seconds. There was shouting and swearing in Turkish. The night patrol had heard and was coming to the aid of the prison guard who had discovered the plot.

The device of escape had been discovered.

The commotion in the street increased. Residents in the nearby houses were awakened and came out to see what was happening. Inside the prison jailers and prisoners disturbed from their sleep, did not know what to make of the noise and shooting. In the general confusion Aryan was not observed.

The guard having marked the window from where the stones had fallen, came in followed by the patrol. It was one of the small apertures of the upper story. They began to investigate. All indications pointed to my room. They opened the door and found me sitting on my mattress undisturbed. The window was undamaged. Next they went to Chukhchik's room. The floor was covered with dirt. The broken window yawned wide, all the bars removed. The culprit standing with folded arms waited for the verdict. Hasan Effendi asked him who the other man was. He did not answer. They beat him cruelly, still he would not betray his companion. They brought heavy chains and put them on Chukhchik's feet, attached with a large iron ball which was almost impossible for a man to lift from the ground. Pouring imprecations accompanied by stinging blows, they went out and locked the door.

On the following day he was led to the chamber of torments, a zaptiah helping to carry the heavy iron ball. They subjected him to all kinds of torture to force him to betray the man who had helped in the attempt to escape. He pressed his lips tightly and would not speak.

When he was brought back to his cell he groaned for hours lying on his back in excruciating pain. My heart went out to him, but I could do nothing to help. Even words of consolation failed me. I could only pray—"God help you, poor fellow."

To break his obstinacy and make him talk they reduced his ration to a small piece of bread and a little water, just enough to keep him alive.

"I am hungry," he moaned. He was weakening appreciably. The edge of hunger might compel him to reveal every thing he knew. I had bread to spare, but how to give it to him. The door was locked.

One evening, after the ration was distributed, I opened my door and quietly stepped out, looking for a means of giving him part of my loaf. There was a space under the door about a quarter of an inch wide. Breaking the loaf into small pieces I squeezed them through it. Chukhchik heard and crawled to the door dragging the iron ball behind him. He gathered the fragments and devoured them greedily.

Suddenly another thought suggested itself. "Wait a minute," I said and ran back to my room. There was a piece of iron there about fifteen inches long, two inches wide and a quarter of an inch thick. I had found that on the first day of my imprisonment and had hidden it under my mattress without imagining that it would play a fateful part in a critical situation. Putting one end under the door and using the wood of the threshold as a lever, I lifted it higher. The space widened large enough to force half a loaf through. Chukhchik said "Thank you" and had enough to eat for the first time in weeks. We both slept comfortably that night.

In the morning he gave the usual signal.

"What is it?" I asked.

"I want to say my prayers," he answered. "But there is no water to wash my hands and face. What shall I do?"

"What difference does it make whether you have washed your face or not. You say your prayers."

"Does God accept prayers when they are offered with dirty hands and face?"

His religious ignorance was pathetic. Who had told him that he could not pray with unclean hands and face? Probably he had seen Mohammedans go through their ablutions before prayers and thought the custom binding on the Christians too.

I explained that although cleanliness is a good thing, "next to godliness," as the saying is, yet under the present circumstances God will not blame him for the lack of it. Religion is a matter of the heart and has nothing to do with the state of the body. If we pray in sincerity and doubt not, God will hear us, accept our petition and grant what we ask, if it is in accordance with His will.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE RESCUE OF ARYAN

*I shut my eyes and turned them on my heart.
As a man calls for wine before he fights.
I asked one draught of earlier, happier sights,
Ere fity I could hope to play my part.
Think first, fight afterwards — the soldier's art;
One taste of the old time sets all to rights.*

SHELLEY

Miss Ananian was living a double life in Sivas. During the day she was a Greek nurse, taking care of the young daughter of the Vali, and gathering political news from her hiding place. At night, she donned man's clothing and took part in the revolutionary activity of the place.

In Sivas she made herself immensely popular. She put her heart and soul in the movement to such an extent, that all the young men of the party recognized in her the devoted and self-sacrificing patriot. No one doubted her sex. Only her brother knew the secret.

One night she brought news to her comrades that an order had arrived from Constantinople for a general massacre of the Armenians. "How did you get that information?" asked some one in the group.

"Never mind how I got it," she replied, "It is a fact; it is true. Go each one of you, to your circle of friends and relatives and warn them. Tell them to prepare for self-defense. Forewarned is forearmed."

There was such earnestness in her declaration, such positive conviction in her expression, that all skepticism was dissipated completely. The news of the coming catastrophe set them all in motion. They all agreed that the first thing to do was to scatter the information far and wide among the Armenian inhabitants of the district. The Prelate and the Church authorities should be informed. But how? The unfriendly attitude of the prominent and the older class of people towards the revolutionary activities of the younger generation, had caused the latter to question the patriotism of their elders. These in turn had no confidence in the method, by means of which the revolutionaries were trying to improve the condition of things.

One of the members of the Executive Committee, Souren

Boyajian remarked that in such a contingency, we cannot ignore the leaders of our community, however unsympathetic they may be towards the cause for which we are labouring. "I move that a delegation be chosen and sent to the Bishop to inform him of what we know. If he takes steps to prevent any bloodshed, well and good; it is his own affair. On the other hand, if he is skeptical and makes light of the communication, we shall be exonerated from responsibility."

The motion was immediately seconded. The chairman appointed Souren Boyajian, with two others, to be commissioned, to go to the Bishop and ask him to call a meeting of the National Council, and communicate to them the secret order received by the Vali, to massacre the Armenians. Boyajian was considered a serious minded young man and highly respected in the community. It was thought that the Bishop and the members of the National Council would listen to him more readily and attach importance to his words. But unfortunately, as in other cities, here also, the leaders of the community had the foolish conviction that, in this enlightened nineteenth century, and under the nose of Europe, the Turk would not dare to cut down unsparingly a Christian people. They would not heed the voice of warning. All suggestions for self-defense were foolishly rejected. The Bishop, addressing himself to the delegation, said: "My children, I am afraid you are carried away by a false report. The source of your information, as you admit, is ephemeral. You forget that we are living in an age of democracy. Despotism is dead or dying. The Turkish Government is under treaty obligations for the safety of her Christian subjects. The rumors that you hear about other places are exaggerated. The thing which you fear could not happen. Go back and occupy yourselves with your respective trades. Leave politics out of your thoughts. Do not worry. We will take care of our people."

It was an utter failure. The official body of the nation was incredulous. When the delegation came back and reported to their comrades what they had seen and heard, there was bitter resentment against the Bishop and his counselors. But instead of despairing, they redoubled their endeavors. They prepared themselves as much as possible to meet the attack when it should come. They organized fighting parties, with their group captains, and appointed their respective positions. They watched and waited.

Anyone who was not blinded by selfish interests and Turcophile feelings could see that there was a change in the behaviour of the Mohammedan populace towards their Christian neighbors. Those who had eyes to see could detect a hidden menace in their conversation. There was a hostile attitude, which was altogether new. Now and then an unguarded word would indicate the impending clash. But many of the Armenians, immersed in business, satisfied with the present condition, concerned only in how to make money, ignored the warning. They were caught entirely unprepared.

The storm burst suddenly. One Saturday, early in the morning, I heard from my room, the firing of guns. In the street pedestrians were running about wildly. Sometimes two men faced each other, fighting desperately. Clubs, daggers, swords and pistols were used. Here and there a defenseless Armenian was caught by a band of armed Turks and murdered. Especially in the market place, the rabble fell on the peaceful shop keepers and merchants and cut them down in cold blood. No submission, no entreaty could save their lives. Even acquaintances and co-called friends were not spared. Those who were well known and with whom business had been transacted were sought out and butchered.

But the young revolutionaries were prepared for this. They were on the watch. With the first onslaught of the enemy, they came out in groups and met the Turkish horde, opposing their advance to the Armenian quarter, fighting them valiantly and killing many of them. Meanwhile those in the business section, who had survived, realizing their precarious situation, escaped to the shelter of their homes, and thus warfare waged between two antagonistic communities. The regular soldiers did not participate in the fight. Soon the military authorities discovered that it was not as easy a task to subdue the revolutionaries and bring them to their knees, as they had anticipated. They were unwilling to employ the army on account of the European residents in the city. Consequently about midday a command was issued and hostilities ceased.

Standing on the little chair, I endeavored to see what was going on outside. There was a panoramic view of the houses, from the roofs and windows of which, firing was carried on. The entire city was filled with noise and confusion. Shoutings and cursings of the men, screams and shrieks of the women filled the air.

While I was occupied in this way, looking from the window, I heard a commotion down in the courtyard of the prison behind me. I sprang from the chair and ran out onto the balcony. The prisoners were in a state of turmoil. I saw a Turkish prisoner, a dagger in his hand, pursuing the Armenians. He had already stabbed three of them, who were stretched on the ground, dead. The rest escaped to any place of refuge they could find. This is what had happened. When the Turks in the jail heard that their co-religionists outside were massacring the Christians, they desired to share in it. One of the keepers brought a dagger and giving it to the first man he met, said, "Go ahead. Finish all of the *giaours* here as they are being disposed of in the city. Here is your chance." The man who possessed the weapon buried it without warning in the body of the first Armenian he met. A friend of his saw it and ran to help him and received the same treatment. Before the Armenians realized what was happening, a third man fell victim to the murderer's assault. They could not believe their eyes. They thought that at least in a government institution, they were safe. It was incredible that murder could be committed in open daylight, in the hearing of the head jailer, and no steps be taken to prevent it. But here was the man with the dagger in his hand running riot. Here were his three victims, rolling in blood—and gasping for breath. Evidently the Turkish officials were behind this affair. Then, the Armenian prisoners thought, they must look out for themselves. In a desperate situation like this, one instinctively looks for means of self-defense.

Suddenly Aryan's voice was heard above the tumult, commanding and calm. Speaking in Armenian, he ordered all of his compatriots to gather around him, where he was standing. Experienced fighter that he was, he had chosen his strategic corner. Taking up a blanket from the ground, he wrapped it around his left arm. Then he snatched his heavy copper samovar (a Russian tea-urn), with his right hand. He stood ready for the assault. He told his followers to do the same. He then faced the man who was armed with the dagger. The Turk rushed at him like a wild bull, with the naked blade raised high, to strike. He did not realize that, this time it was not a defenseless man, whom he could stab without warning, but a fearless warrior facing him, able to give an account of himself in situations worse than the present. As he approach-

ed Aryan struck with his foot such a hard blow on the chest that the fellow fell down on his back, breathing hard. The knife flew from his hand and fell among the crowd of Turks. In a body they rushed at Aryan to tear him to pieces. But the Armenians were ready by this time, about ninety of them, who had gathered around their leader, resolved to sell their lives dearly. Aryan did not move from his place. With concentrated attention, he waited for the first assailant to come within his reach. He was not excited. Holding the protected left arm in front of him and the samovar in the right hand, ready to strike. One could see in his flashing eyes, set face and determined attitude, the invincible fighter. None of the Turks dared to be the first to attack. They were in battle array against the Armenians. There was a space between the two parties. Neither one side nor the other attempted to cross it.

At this critical moment an extraordinary thing happened. Osman Ahmed, Aryan's friend, came forward, and standing between the two belligerent groups, commanded them to retreat. Addressing the Turks, he cried: "You cowardly dogs! You think it is brave to attack with a dagger, men who are unarmed. They are like birds in a cage. Have you forgotten that these Armenian prisoners are our comrades in misfortune? We are all in the same predicament. If you are stout-hearted enough, go out and fight on equal terms, against men who are properly armed. But as to these fellow prisoners, whoever tries to harm them, has to settle his account with me first. Here I stand beside them. Come if you dare!"

Advancing to where Aryan was standing, he challenged them. When no one moved, he provoked them by saying that they could fight only if they were sure of the safety of their own skins.

This had a salutary effect on the Turks. Osman and Levon were recognized as the lions of the prison. Their friendship and intimacy were well known to everybody.

Levon made a proposition. He said; "Who among you has confidence in himself, let him come forward unarmed and we will measure our strength in the presence of all of our comrades, and in this way settle our differences."

All attention was focused on him. They were scrutinizing his athletic figure, colossal legs planted firmly on the

ground, muscular arms and powerful neck. Especially his dauntless eyes inspired the spectator with fear.

While the Turks were looking at one another and hesitating, the gate of the prison opened and the Major entered with a dozen soldiers and came towards the place where the crowd had gathered. Word had reached him that the prisoners were killing each other. Seeing the dead bodies on the ground, he asked the head jailer who had done that and how. Just then he caught sight of the dagger in the hand of one of the Turks. He wanted to know how it was procured. The Turks would not betray the guilty jailer. The Armenians also kept silent. He ordered the corpses to be removed and addressing the prisoners, declared that it was forbidden to fight in the prison. "This is an institution of his majesty, the Sultan, and all in it are safe, under his imperial shadow. Long live our gracious Padishah!"

Turning to the head jailer, he instructed him to separate the Armenians from the Turks and confine them in a compartment by themselves. It was all cant. He could easily have discovered the guilty one if he had so desired, but he approved of what had been done.

That night there was a consultation in the private office of the Vali, where all of the military and civil functionaries had gathered.

The official, who was appointed to carry out the massacre, reported that the result of the attack had not been satisfactory. "Effendum, the giaours were fighting like tigers. They were evidently prepared to receive us. The revolutionaries were well armed and well organized. In some quarters they even became aggressive. There are as many dead Turks as Armenians."

"Where did they get their firearms?" asked one of the councillors.

"I do not know. There was firing from many houses. The Armenian district looked like a battlefield. Only those were dispatched whom we took by surprise in the shops and business places."

"Do you think that the Armenians had an inkling of what was coming to them?" asked the Major.

"It seems to me that the revolutionaries had more than a vague supposition. From the way they were acting, it looked as if they had positive knowledge of what was in store for

them. They must have spies, who communicate to them the secrets of the state. As soon as the bugle sounded, groups of armed men came out of their hiding places and effectively blocked our advance. Pasha Effendi, there are traitors in our government circle."

"Gather the weapons of the Armenians," commanded the Vali angrily. "We cannot afford to fail to carry out the order of our sovereign. When the news of the success of the massacre at other cities and towns arrives in Yildez (Palace of the Sultan), we shall be disgraced. Those higher up will think that we are either in sympathy with the Armenians, or incompetent to discharge our duty in carrying out the injunction of the Sultan. We shall be a laughing stock that with all the means at our disposal, with all the arms and ammunition plentifully provided, we could not give a crushing blow to a handful of unorganized people. Do you know what will happen? They will depose us summarily and send other men in our place, who will accomplish what is desired with more efficiency." Turning to the Major, he said: "Issue a proclamation that reconciliation has been effected between the two elements of the population and consequently any one who has firearms of any kind should surrender them to the government to prevent possible future hostilities. When you have disarmed the Armenians in this way, then they will be at your mercy and you can work their destruction without the risk of shedding the blood of a single Turk."

The Major also reported the fighting in the prison house. He said that to exonerate the prison authorities, he had ordered that the corpses of the Armenians, who were stabbed there should be taken out to the streets, and thrown among the other dead bodies as if they had fallen during the general encounter. Tomorrow all of the bodies shall be gathered and buried.

"How were the three men stabbed in the prison house?" asked the Vali. "Did somebody have a dagger?"

"Yes, Pasha. One of the Turkish prisoners had it. I investigated and found that Suleiman, the jailer, had helped the Turks by slipping a knife into their hands. The man who took hold of it killed three giaours one after another before they realized what was happening."

"Well done, Suleiman," shouted the Vali. "He has un-

derstood correctly the spirit of the order of the Padishah. Reward him. Promote him."

"Very well, sir, it shall be done. But Suleiman's cooperation would have had better results, if it were not for that pig of an Armenian, called Levon, who gathered his compatriots and defended them all against further assaults."

"Who is Levon? Is he a revolutionary?"

"Yes sir."

"Has he killed any one?"

"No."

"What is his sentence?"

"He has not been tried yet."

"Very well, then. This is the time to convict him. Let him die. It is not necessary to lose time for the trial of an Armenian. Put that dangerous creature out of the way. Put a bullet through his heart and cast his body with the other corpses. Who will know how he was killed in this turmoil and disturbance?"

Arusag, behind the partition, heard no more. She withdrew noiselessly from her place of hiding without being seen. She slipped out of the house and disappeared in the darkness. There were dead bodies everywhere all along the streets. Here and there Turks, lanterns in hand, were searching for their friends among the dead. They did not molest her. Once or twice night patrol stopped her to question who she was and where she was going. She could answer them easily since she was well-known as the Greek teacher in the house of the governor. She told them that, having finished her work in the Palace, she was going home to her mother. Her appearance did not cause suspicion. Some even knew her by sight, having seen her out walking with her pupil, the daughter of the Vali.

When she arrived home, her whole body was trembling, not with fear, but from excitement. She said nothing to her mother. She went to her room, changed her clothes, fixed her disguise, called her brother Karekin, and they went out together. She took for granted that the revolutionary leaders would have a meeting at this time to make arrangements for the morrow. Arusag and Karekin repaired to the well-known rendezvous. It was true. All the comrades were present. They were very glad to see comrade, Armen. "Where have you been all this time?" asked the chairman. "We were afraid a

misfortune had befallen you. We did not see you during the fighting."

She told them that she had been gathering news. "The Turkish authorities are not satisfied with the result of the encounter. They are planning to disarm the Armenians. I hope our leading men will not fall into the trap. We must warn them, even though they would not give credence to our word. But what I am anxious about is the fate of our comrade, Levon in the prison. They are going to murder him. I have a scheme to rescue him. Who will volunteer to accompany Karekin and myself? They are taking him from prison tonight, to bring him to the Armenian quarter, to kill him there and throw his body among the dead. We could save him."

The whole body stood up as one man. There was no time to lose. She unfolded her plan, explained the line of attack minutely, appointed a place for each man in a line from the prison house to the Armenian section. Before sending them to their respective stations, she said: "Karekin and I go to the entrance of the court of the prison house and wait there in the dark. When Levon is brought out we will follow him at a distance. As his guards turn the corner of the street where a man is hidden, he will follow them. At a certain point you will hear an owl hooting. That is a signal for attack. We will kill the guards and release the prisoner. Now every one to his station."

The next step was to let Aryan know about this plan. Arusag was afraid that if he guessed that they were taking him to his death, he would put up such a fight with his bare fists that they would be compelled to kill him then and there and thus frustrate her plan. She told Karekin to go to his appointed place and wait there for her. She ran back home, changed her clothes and returned, walking rapidly through the streets within the shadow of the walls until she came to the place where her brother was waiting. From the courtyard they could see the door of the prison. It was about midnight when it opened and Aryan came out between two soldiers, and was led to the office of the chief of police. There he was treated politely.

"Levon," said the Chief, "your conduct today, at the fight in the prison, has enraged all of the Mussulman prisoners and they have sworn to murder you at the first opportunity. Consequently, to prevent further bloodshed, the Vali Pasha

has ordered that you should be taken to another prison, which is located in a distant part of the city. You see how considerate we are about your safety. It is your duty to pray for a long life for our gracious padishah. Say, Long live the Sultan."

Aryan hesitated. He could detect a trick in these kind words. He was distrustful. "Bey Effendi," he said, a sarcastic smile spreading on his face, "it is very kind of you to be careful about my safety. But I prefer to stay where I am. No one can do me harm. A host of Turkish prisoners cannot kill me if the keepers would not arm them with knives. Yesterday the Armenians were taken by surprise, that is how three of them were massacred. You say the mussulman prisoners have sworn to murder me. I challenged them to come forward and do their worst. They all retreated like the cowards that they are. No one can kill me unless it is done by trickery."

Suddenly a noise was heard outside. The soldier at the door was hindering someone from coming in. A woman was urging him to let her pass. Speaking loudly, she said, "I must see the Major. My business will not brook delay." The attention of all was turned to the door. At the same instant the Greek nurse of the Vali, pushing the soldier to one side rushed in.

"Alas! Bey Effendi!" she bewailed, eyes swimming with tears, "help me! I want to go home to my poor mother who is mourning for her only son, and the patrols will not let me pass. Word reached me a few minutes ago, that my brother was killed, by mistake no doubt, and the Pasha kindly permitted me to go home and comfort my mother. At every corner they stop me, saying, 'Yassak Dir' (forbidden) and they force me to go back from where I came. They do not seem to know me. They think I am an Armenian. Pray, give me a pass, that I may go to my mother unmolested." And she began weeping and shedding tears.

Aryan's heart leapt into his mouth. He was deeply stirred. Arusag had come to help him. How! She made a gesture of contempt towards the prisoner, in the sight of the Major, as much to say—"how dare you cast an amorous look at me."

The Major knew Sophy, whom he had often met in the residence of the Vali. He had spoken to her several times.

"Oh! Mademoiselle Sophy!" exclaimed the Major. "You are late to be out in the streets at this time. Do you know how

dangerous it is to be out alone on a night like this? You must be more careful."

"Yes, I know," she answered. "But only a little while ago I heard the bad news of the death of my brother. I am not afraid to go alone, if I could have a pass to identify myself."

The Major told the clerk to write on a piece of paper, an order to the soldiers guarding the city, to give her free passage.

While the order was being prepared, Arusag said, "If these Armenians had any sense, they would not rebel against our Padishah. I was telling the Armenian cook at the Palace today to convince his friends that it would be much better for them to surrender to their masters. The government is kind; they will take care of them."

When the clerk gave the piece of paper to her, she bowed gracefully and thanking the Major, went out.

Aryan had learned his lesson. The Major told the soldiers to tie his hands behind his back. He submitted without saying a word.

The two soldiers, rifles on their shoulders, led him out. One was going in front of him, one following. They passed through the Turkish quarter without an incident. Once they were challenged by the patrols, but as soon as they were recognized, they were allowed to pass. Advancing quickly, they entered the Armenian quarter. Their destination was the Apostolic Church, outside of which the bodies of the slain were more thickly scattered. There was no moon. It was a starlit night. The thick walls of the Church cast a dark shadow over the road. It was difficult to see two steps ahead. Suddenly the sharp blades of two poniards flashed in the shadow and were instantly plunged into the breasts of the two soldiers. Without uttering a word they fell to the ground dead. Immediately unseen hands cut the cords on Aryan's arms. He looked around and saw Arusag busily engaged in stripping the soldiers of their uniforms. He took a step towards her. She directed him to do the same with the other soldier. She made a bundle of the clothes and gave it to him to carry. Karekin gathered the guns and the other weapons. She led the way and they disappeared in the darkness. At the next corner she stopped, took off her skirt and threw it in the gutter, fixed the mustache and put on a masculine appearance.

When they arrived at the appointed place, she put her fingers to her lips and hooted like an owl, long and loud. From all sides the men ran towards her, with the expectation of a fight. Their astonishment was immense, when they saw Armen, Karekin and Levon standing together and waiting for them. What had happened? Who saved Aryan? Why were they not called to help?

Armen explained that the work of the rescue of comrade Levon was easier than was anticipated. "I was expecting that at least half a dozen soldiers would accompany him and we should have been compelled to wage regular warfare. But the fat-headed officer, deceived by Levon's submission, had sent only two soldiers to guard him. In order not to awaken their suspicion, which might have jeopardized the comrade's life, I did not call you, and with my brother, Karekin, accomplished what we intended to do without much trouble."

CHAPTER TWELVE

A NIGHT OF PERIL

*While I draw this fleeting breath.
When my eyes shall close in death.
When I rise to worlds unknown.
And behold Thee on Thy throne.
Rock of ages, cleft for me.
Let me hide myself in Thee.*

TOPLADY

That was a night of nervous tension. The voice of lamentation could be heard until morning. The moaning of the wounded in the street below made sleep impossible. As soon as my eyes were closed the spectre of the slain would rise before me and cause anguish.

It was after midnight. I was still tossing sleeplessly from side to side when the sound of whispering reached my ears from outside the balcony. I sprang to my feet and went to the door. The creak of muffled footsteps on the wooden floor could be heard distinctly. I put my ear to the keyhole to hear what was said. Two men were talking. "This is the room." "Not that, the next one." I hurried to the window and looked through a crack. The shadows of three men passed. They were trying to find my room. Who were they? What did they want?

All the prisoners were locked in their compartments for the night. They must be jailers. What is their business with me at this late hour. The stealthy movements caused apprehension.

But why do they hesitate? They know exactly where I am located. Now they are outside the door. They try to open it. When it did not yield, one of them said in a low voice: "Open the door." I did not reply. "Let us break it," one of them suggested. "No, it will make too much noise," he was answered.

Evidently they were Turkish prisoners and not working in collusion with the prison authorities. There was no doubt of their evil intention.

The picture of the murdered men in the courtyard was still vivid in my mind. I could almost see the man with the dagger outside my door. They knew who I was, having seen me often walking on the balcony. After the brave defense of

Aryan yesterday, which frustrated the plan of destroying the Armenian prisoners, several of the criminals had turned towards me and marked the location of my room. But I never thought they would dare to wreak their vengeance on me in this way. To tell the truth I was afraid. But fear drove me to a desperate determination to sell my life dearly. I resolved to fight and to do as much damage as possible to the murderers.

Grasping the piece of iron that I had found in my room, I put one end into the keyhole and pressed it against the door with all my strength to prevent it from opening.

I am naturally a peace-loving man and dislike fighting, but, at this moment, the imminence of danger made me determined that I would not be killed without resistance. Death is not a calamity when it comes in a struggle for self-preservation. A silent prayer winged from my heart to Him, who is the judge of all, asking His protection. A serenity rested upon my soul. The muscles of my arm stiffened. I was ready. The first man who puts his head inside will get it. He would at least lose an eye.

They put their shoulders against the door to break it with as little noise as possible. (Now the middle part bent in ready to burst.) I raised the iron to strike.

At this moment a rough voice from down below called. "Who is there?" It was Hasan Effendi, the head jailer. The assassins heard, stopped working and took to their heels.

He met them on the stairs and began to strike with the whip in his hand right and left. He drove them to their compartment. "Listen, you dogs, you cannot do what you like in this prison. This is a government institution. Severe punishment awaits the disobedient."

After seeing that everything was in order he came to my room and assured me that no harm would come to me. When he saw me still apprehensive and diffident, he went out on the balcony and leaned over the rail. With a voice that filled the whole building, he shouted: "Hear, ye all. No one can approach this room. Here stays the preacher of Marsovan. There is a special order from the Capital for his protection. The person who attempts to injure him in any way will have to reckon with the Governor." Then turning to me: "Now you know. Be at rest and go to sleep. No one will molest you."

The suddenness with which the crisis took a favorable turn dazed me. A minute ago death was staring me in the

face, now I had assurance of security. What was it the man said? Could one give credence to his word? After being deceived so often, one becomes incredulous.

Pulling the mattress behind the door for safety I lay down.

About an hour later, I heard footsteps on the balcony once more. Some one was coming toward my room, not stealthily, as before, but openly. He turned the knob. It was locked.

"Open the door, it is I."

"What do you want, Hasan Effendi?" I asked at the same time opening the door. When he saw the mattress, he realized that my fear was not quite allayed.

"You are sleeping just behind the door so that no one could get in without waking you. Remove it and leave the door open."

When he saw me still hesitating he continued in an offended tone: "Have you no confidence in my ability to protect you? I am the governor here. I can crush like dirt under my foot, any man who dares to commit an act of insubordination. Do as I tell you and sleep in peace."

Sleep was impossible all night. The slightest noise would reach my ears in an exaggerated form. In the pitch darkness I fancied men were feeling their way towards me with raised hands in which the blades of daggers were shining. When I dozed from fatigue, terrible nightmares tormented me. Once I dreamed that in Ourfa the roof of our house had fallen and my mother and brothers narrowly escaped from the ruins. Another time I saw that the wall of my church in Marsovan had fallen and the congregation fled in fear.

I could endure it no longer. Kneeling down I invoked divine help. I prayed that night as I had never prayed before in my life. I asked God to make me strong and able to bear these afflictions without resentment. I earnestly supplicated Christ to reveal Himself to me and show my end. Prayer quieted my nerves and restored my mental calm. It was almost morning. I do not know whether I was awake or asleep. A vision appeared distinctly to my soul's eye. Jesus stood beside me. He said in a gentle voice: "Be not afraid. You will live. You will serve me yet for many years to come."

The sun had already risen; its golden rays shone through the window, when I opened my eyes. What a divine revelation

had been vouchsafed to me! It filled my heart with joy. It exhilarated me. It cheered my spirit. I felt free. The four walls of the prison faded. Richard Lovelace's verse actually materialized—

Stone walls do not a prison make,
 Nor iron bars a cage;
 Minds innocent and quiet take
 That for an hermitage:
 If I have freedom in my love,
 And in my soul am free,
 Angels alone that soar above,
 Enjoy such liberty.

A supernatural power had imparted courage to me to endure another day's sufferings. The Lord Himself had come and given me His word of assurance. Rejoice in the Lord!

Listen! What do I hear? The voice of Christian singing in a Moslem prison filled the air. I recognized the melody of a well known canticle of the mother church. The compartment where the Armenian prisoners were confined was directly under my room. They were greeting the morning light by singing that wonderful hymn, composed centuries ago by one of the saints of our ancient church. The rhythmical flow of the song, sung by several dozen men's voices, resounded in every corner of the large building. They put their heart into it and felt each word they uttered.

"Sweet morning light, Sun of Righteousness, shine upon
 my soul.

Word of life and grace, springing from the Father, enter
 my spirit.

Source of compassion, of thy hidden treasures, make me
 the finder.

Door of rich mercies, open to thy confessor, help me to
 enter.

Thou Three in One, Provider for all, have mercy on me.
 Awake, Lord, to help, revive those asleep, like angels to
 be.

I Am That I Am, Father Eternal, Son and Holy Ghost;
 Receive me in mercy, receive Merciful, receive Compas-
 sionate."

This beautiful hymn of Nerses Shenorhaly, written in the twelfth century, with its melodious cadence, heard under such dire circumstances, touched me with a thrill of spiritual

uplift. Why should I hide it. I was crying like a child, shedding tears, I knew not, of joy or sadness.

I approached the window, opened it and raising my voice joined them. There was a deacon among the prisoners. He was leading the singing.

Just then the Turks were taken out for their morning exercise. They heard the song and became attentive (listening). The words were not intelligible, but they felt that the song was praise and prayer. Even the jailers did not make as much noise as they usually did when they took the prisoners out. Is it not true that within every human being, including the depraved criminal, there is hunger for things divine. The attitude of the crowd of culprits became reverential.

When the singing ended a hush fell over the courtyard. I felt an inner urge to pray. Kneeling before the open window I poured out my heart in the presence of God with a loud voice so that my fellow prisoners could hear. I asked Him to have mercy on these young souls and to spare their lives. I supplicated Him for the preservation of our people and for the protection of our helpless mothers and sisters. I appealed to the Prince of Peace to restore peace and goodwill between the Christians and Moslems.

After the Turks were shut in their compartments, the Armenians were taken out for their daily requirements. No one spoke. Every person seemed to have retired into himself and was thinking of his own home and dear ones.

That day no disturbance occurred in the city. The fighting did not continue. Absence of hostility was also noticeable among the prisoners. They had a subdued appearance.

When the keepers took out Chukhchik to lead him to the lavatory, he cast a pitiful glance at me as he passed my window. The poor boy had aged in a few days. He was groaning beneath the heavy chains. His custodians were not willing to stretch a helping hand. He stopped a minute to rest. One of them hit him with the whip and told him to go on.

"Why do you beat me. I am tired and cannot walk fast. If you intend to kill me, do so at once, without tormenting me."

O, those cowardly brutes, striking a chained man. If Chukhchik were free he could drive half a dozen of them before him. They knew it and took advantage of his bonds.

"I am hungry and thirsty," he said when the jailers brought him back to his cell. "I have not eaten for twenty-four hours."

"It is the same with me," I answered. "The distribution of the rations has been neglected since yesterday."

After a while he called me again.

"What is it, my son?"

"I believe you are going to be released soon."

"What makes you think so?"

"Did you not hear what the Chief said last night? You have friends, who are working for you. It seems to me that you will get your freedom and the rest of us are going to remain here to die."

"Do not give up hope, Chukhchik. Trust in God. As for what the Chief said, I do not attach much importance to his words. It is true that he saved me from the assassins, but who knows for what purpose."

As if he was fully settled in his mind that my release would take place soon, he asked:

"Where will you go when you get out of here?"

This question awakened the memory of my former days in England where I had spent many happy years, of my care-free college life with its pleasant associations. It brought back the reminiscences of my home in Ourfa, with father and mother, brothers and sister, from whom I had not heard for many months. Are they alive or martyred with many others?

Was there any element of truth in what the head jailer had said that orders for my protection were sent from higher authorities? If so, then my friends in England must have heard of my imprisonment and were using their influence to get me out.

The second day also passed quietly. Occasionally one could hear in the distance the cries of a woman who had just discovered the death of a dear one. The creaking sound of the carts, gathering the dead bodies from the streets, continued for several hours.

The Armenian prisoners no longer walked in the courtyard. Only twice a day, morning and evening, were they let out for a short time. Aryan's absence made me feel uneasy. Have they done away with him? His brave defense on the day of fighting must have angered the authorities.

Mr. Perry came to see me. He was not permitted to give me any news from the outside world, except news of a personal character. He told me that the Pastor of the Evangelical Church of Sivas was killed. During the encounter he happened to be in the market place. He ran to take refuge in the store of a Turkish acquaintance, thinking he would be safe there. But a regular soldier in uniform shot him in cold blood. When Mr. Perry said this, he looked significantly at the official who was listening to our conversation. He also told me that the poor janitor of the church met his death on that same day when he was coming to the prison house to take away the empty plates in which he had brought me food.

These two deaths caused me much grief. The Pastor was a highly educated man and beloved by his church. It weighed upon my heart that the janitor's life was sacrificed in my service.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

VENGEANCE

*Recompence to no man evil for evil
Avenge not yourselves: for it is written
Vengeance is mine: therefore if thine
Enemy hunger, feed him: if he thirst,
Give him drink: for in so doing thou
Shalt heap coals of fire on his head.*

ST. PAUL

After Aryan's narrow escape, he was led by Arusag to her house. The revolutionary leaders gathered to meet him. They informed him how an official order had come from Constantinople for a wholesale massacre. They were all possessed with one idea: to "execute fierce vengeance on their foes." The iron had entered into their souls.

Although the plan of Aryan's release was well-formed and skilfully executed, yet they were not credulous enough to think that the Turkish authorities would let the matter rest without an intensive investigation. When they discovered that the two executioners were themselves killed and the prisoner had escaped, they would take steps to recapture him and his gang.

Aryan mapped out a course of action. He proposed to call out volunteers to join them and retire to the mountains and to find a stronghold and from there to inflict injury on the government in revenge for the martyred Christians.

Aryan was a born general. He was endowed with all the qualifications of a leader. He said: "Comrades, the time is short. We have to be away from this place before sunrise. Now it is about three o'clock. There are at least two hours to daybreak, during which we must disappear. Who among you was born and raised in this neighborhood and is well acquainted with the surrounding country?"

Several young men informed him that they were natives of this place and knew every part of the nearby hills and mountains.

Aryan designated two men, natives of Sivas, to remain in the city and to enlist recruits and form a line of communication between the local groups and those who had retired to the mountains.

Procuring some food, they shouldered their guns and went out. Nothing happened on the way and they reached the upper regions of the foothills.

The sun was just rising behind the Taurus range when they came to a lonely corner of a valley where a spring of cold water was bubbling up from the rocks. Here they camped, and, posting sentinels, they lay down in the shadow of the rocks and rested.

Aryan spent several days in exploring the location. It was a gully between the hills formed in the shape of an elongated plate. Down in the plain, about two miles away towards the west, the main highway passed, connecting Sivas with other cities. To come up to the hills, one had to pass through a glen which could be seen from the camping ground.

On the eastern side, the land was mountainous. About three days journey from the camp there were Turkish villages, but the way was rough and uneven, strewn all along with jagged and sharp stones. It was difficult, if not impossible, to travel on horseback. In the north and south, gigantic buttes rose with ragged peaks, forming a natural fortress. A hundred men, well-armed could easily defend this position against ten times that number of attackers. It was decided to make this place their headquarters, for the time being, at any rate. Every day new volunteers arrived, bringing with them arms and ammunition.

Aryan trained his followers regularly. He divided them into groups and appointed captains over each. A place was assigned to each company and they were told to familiarize themselves with the position for defensive purposes. Each captain was held responsible for his station. The alarm would be sounded, without notice, any time of the day or night, to see if every one knew what to do. They became so efficient that, as soon as the blast of the trumpet was heard, they would run to their respective ramparts, from wherever they were at the time. They performed willingly and joyfully any duty laid upon them.

When the number of warriors was calculated to be sufficient for defensive and offensive purposes, Aryan gathered them together one day and addressed them as follows: "Comrades, forget not that our quarrel is with the Turkish Government. We do not fight the common people, whether they are Turks or Kurds. Although they took part in the massacres,

it was the government who incited them. When you go to the nearby villages to buy provisions, pay for what you get. Only in case of opposition and enmity you are entitled to fight them. Being victorious you are at liberty to confiscate their possessions. Because the Mohammedan hordes behave like barbarians, we should not imitate them. Our cause is sacred. We fight for self-defense, for home and hearth. Follow the international laws of warfare. An enemy army in taking a city does not touch the civilian population, but does seize the military stores and government possessions. When you meet a band of soldiers, attack them and appropriate their arms and horses and whatever they have. Do not turn your weapons against the harmless and defenseless population. One thing I want especially to emphasize,—Respect the women of the enemy.”

These words of the Leader were received with approval. Now the meeting was open for questions.

Vahan, one of the captains, desired to know if provision of weapons had been made for a long siege. “We can procure enough food,” he said, “from the city and the villages. But what about arms and ammunition? Some of the muskets our men possess, are old fashioned and are not of much use in an emergency. I propose that we organize a band of volunteers, to go to the city by night and attack the government magazine and carry off some of the guns stored there. I am willing to lead the assault if my proposition is accepted.”

Several men volunteered to join him.

“That is a good scheme,” said another captain,” but is it practical? Does anyone know how strongly the depository is guarded?”

“With our present number and the means we have at our disposal, I do not think we could succeed,” answered Arshak, a former teacher in one of the schools of Sivas. “As far as I know the armory is well protected. It is a building next to the barracks and watch is kept day and night.”

“It would be wiser to wait until more favorable conditions present themselves and we are sure of success,” added another.

One of the comrades asked: “What should be done if a Kurd or a Turk, unaware of our presence, accidentally approaches our position?”

"If he comes near enough to discover our camp, you have no alternative. It is necessary to silence him," answered Aryan.

Everyone understood the meaning of that statement.

Just then the bugle was sounded calling the men to arms. The meeting was immediately broken up and every one ran to his place of defense.

Their activities consisted mainly of molesting the government and the military authorities. When they found a detachment of soldiers outside the city, they attacked them and took possession of their rifles and cartridges.

Sometimes, under the leadership of one of the captains, they organized raiding parties upon the strongholds of the Kurdish sheiks who were notorious for the damage they had done to the Armenian villagers.

The raiders would suddenly appear before a settlement, surround the residence of the chief and, after a bloody fight, carry off as much booty as they could. On these occasions they made a point of searching the houses for captive girls who had been abducted by the Kurds. If they found any, they returned them safely to their parents. The avengers were careful to carry on these marauding excursions far from their headquarters, in order not to betray its location, and returned by two's and three's, by devious ways.

One of these predatory incursions is now commemorated each year as "The Expedition of Khanassor."

On the plateau of Khanassor, near the Persian boundary, lived a Kurdish clan under a chieftain known as Sharaf Bey. This man and his Mazrik tribe were celebrated for their fiendish cruelty and bloodthirsty ferocity. During the massacres, they had assisted in the butchering of many defenseless Christian villagers, for which service the Great Assassin had sent to Sharaf Bey a firman—a special edict of approbation and ratification.

The limit of endurance was reached, when a company of Armenian volunteers, about 800 in number, under the guidance of Avedissian, a brave and able leader, retreating from a powerful enemy after an engagement, were attacked treacherously from behind, near the monastery of St. Bartholomew, by this Mazrik clan and cut down unsparingly.

A plan of expedition was formed and volunteers were called to the ranks. Captain Vartan was elected to take charge of the raid. They arrived at the foothills of Araoul, near the

plains where Sharaf Bey had encamped with his followers and women. It was a dark night. Vartan distributed his men at strategic points. When the twilight partially illuminated the face of the country, the black tents of the Mazriks could be distinguished, with their pointed roofs. The beseigers were waiting impatiently for the signal of attack, filled with the bitter feeling of vengeance. Vartan was watching with eagle eyes for a sign of life among the tents. At last the Kurds began to stir; the women lit the fires and prepared the coffee; the men came out into the open, to the cool fresh air. They were unaware of the danger lurking around them. Suddenly the blast of a volley of a hundred rifles reverberated in the calm morning air. At the same instant about as many Kurds fell. They were certainly taken by surprise. Those inside the tents did not know what was happening. They grasped their guns and rushed out. They were shot down as they searched vainly for the enemy. It did not last very long. Women, pressing babies to their breasts, were running to and fro. At last when comparative quiet was established, Vartan, speaking in Kurdish, assured them that no harm would come to the women and children.

But where was Sharaf Bey all this time. Nobody had seen him leave his tent. When the attackers entered, they could see only a bunch of females herded together in one corner. Sharaf Bey had escaped, disguised as a woman. Coward that he was, he did not have the nerve to stand and fight like a man. His sword and the royal firman fell into the hands of the revolutionaries as a souvenir to remind the future generations of this memorable act of vengeance and the annihilation of a tribe of cut-throats. The tents were fired and Vartan left with his followers, leaving behind him a heap of ashes to show Abd-ul-Hamid that savage methods could be reciprocated and that the law of retaliation existed even in Turkey and there were men who could enforce it.

There was great rejoicing at the headquarters when the raiders came back safely and related the success of the campaign. The loot they brought with them augmented their supplies.

Aryan was continually on the lookout for a chance to cause damage to the government. He had chosen a high pinnacle where he often repaired and with his binoculars surveyed the surrounding country. Sometimes he would descry far

away on the highway a band of Armenian prisoners being deported to the Syrian desert in the south. Marking where they had camped along the road and measuring the strength of the convoy, he organized a rescue party, killed the guard and delivered the captives. This happened several times. The central government in Sivas could not find any trace of these rescuers. From all appearances it was the work of the revolutionaries. Supposing that they had taken refuge in the neighboring mountains, the Vali sent a detachment of soldiers to discover their hiding place. The squad never returned. A stronger force was dispatched. This also fell in a trap. Only two wounded privates escaped and crawled back to the city to tell what they had seen.

In those days a Major arrived from the north with authority to command the army division of the city. When he learned that there was a body of revolutionaries hidden in the nearby mountains, he decided personally to arrest them.

"I have had dealings with the Armenians in the past," he told the Vali, "I am acquainted with the method of their activity. I have an old score to settle with them. You prepare a line of gallows in the public square. In a few days I will deliver these obnoxious bandits into your hands."

The Major was a stranger to the environs of the country. He selected two mountaineers to lead the way. A whole week was spent in exploring the hills and the valleys. The Armenians did not stir from their place, but through spies they followed the movements of the Turkish army. Aryan did not consider it wise to come out to the open field and give battle to a much larger army of trained soldiers, with their modern rifles and inexhaustible ammunition.

An incident, however, revealed the place of hiding of the Armenians. A gang of Kurdish Hamediahs had received word from the central government to go and join the Major's army and to undertake the duty of guiding him. The Kurds were familiar with mountains. In order to gain time, instead of following the highway, they cut through a ravine, which led directly to the Armenian headquarters.

A sentinel saw them at a distance and reported to Aryan that a number of horsemen were approaching by way of the narrow passage between the hills. They could be seen, about twenty of them, advancing slowly and laboriously, because

of the uneven and stony ground. There was no other alternative. They must be stopped.

Aryan posted about a dozen men behind the big boulders along the defile. He, himself, with two aides, stood openly in the middle of the track. When the Kurds were just leaving the stony ground and trying to reach the comparatively smooth bottom of the valley, to gain more speed, they suddenly heard a voice calling upon them to stop and surrender. Impulsively they reached for their guns. The signal was given and the firing began. From unexpected spots a shower of lead poured upon them. Not a chance was given them to shoot. Aryan himself dropped the leader. The Kurds fell to the ground one after the other like a pack of wolves caught in a trap.

One of them, who was riding a strong horse, realizing in time the hoplessness of the situation, he turned his horse's head and tried to escape. He spotted a fox trail going up the mountain. He took it. In spite of the arduous climbing he soon was out of sight. The Armenians, however, had seen him. Two of them followed on foot. After a while they saw him. Because of the distance and the rocky hillside, their aim did not take effect. They persisted in pursuing him. Sometimes he was altogether lost sight. The trail ended at a projection with a precipice of a hundred feet deep. The fugitive was nowhere to be seen. When they investigated more closely, they found the horse lying dead at the bottom of the pit with broken legs. He had jumped from that prominence, killed his horse and made his get-away.

They returned to the camp and reported their failure. It was easy to predict what would happen. The escaped Kurd would find his way to the Turkish camp and render an account of the calamity which the Hamediah band had encountered. He would be able to lead the Major to their stronghold.

Aryan ordered his bugler to summon the men to the center. When they had gathered together, he addressed them, saying, "Comrades, our hiding place is discovered by the enemy. One of the Kurds has escaped. We shall soon come face to face with the Turkish army. It is most important to know this fact and be prepared for the imminent encounter. Every captain should be on duty and occupy with his contingent the place assigned to him. Do not leave your barricades under any circumstances. Be on the alert continuously. Fortify the weak points of your entrenchments. Add artificial strength on the

natural one to your defensive work. We have an abundant supply of guns and ammunitions, but they are not inexhaustible. Do not waste them. Let every individual make it a matter of honor that his ball finds its mark."

"Captain Aznavourian is supervisor of the fortifications. He will inspect every position carefully. Consider yourselves in a state of war, day and night. The half of the company sleeps and the other half keeps watch. Sleep with guns in your hands and the cartridge belt on. You will be apprized of the approach of the enemy."

"Miroyan's company will stay in the center on horse back, as reserves wherever and whenever needed.

"If we can resist the first offensive successfully, you may be sure that a larger army will be sent against us. Remember Vartan the Brave who, with a handful of soldiers, opposed a great Persian army. Although he died, he invested himself with immortal glory. We are fighting for the same cause and have the same odds against us. Let the Turk know that we are not afraid to die. Long live Armenia!"

Aryan had hardly ceased speaking when Arshak Ayvazian, a well known man of letters, stood up and making a sign to others, began to sing:

"I am a son of Dalvorik,
Not the child of a weakling;
Son of the hills, child of the rocks,
A true chip of the ancient oaks.
"A fearless son of Dalvorik,
I bend no head to enemy,
A free lad of hills and cloughs,
Have not handled spades nor ploughs."

Aryan was standing on a high rock. When they came to the chorus, he told them to rise. "Sing, all of you." The strong voices of a couple of hundred young men echoed from the surrounding mountains and reverberated over the valleys:

"My brothers, brave brothers,
I am a son of Dalvorik,
For freedom's sake, come, follow me:
Forward, onward, to victory."

Nothing unusual happened that night. Here and there the outlines of a man could be distinguished moving among the rocks, reconnoitering the land.

At the break of day, Aryan was in his high watch-tower surveying the surrounding country with his field glasses. He could see the Turkish army waking. There was brisk activity, evidence of an imminent offensive. He came back to the camp and sent word to each company to be ready for an assault.

The Turks began to move forward. They were advancing on foot and horseback. The commander was leading them. Aryan tried to determine his rank. He was wearing the insignia of a major. His face could not be clearly distinguished. It was not possible to say whether he was the same officer who had visited the prison during the clash between Turks and Armenians. Arusag, who was standing beside in man's clothing, as his body guard, took the field glasses and turned it towards the major. Suddenly she changed color; her hands trembled.

"What is it? What has happened?" Aryan asked.

"I am only disconcerted. What a strange coincidence! Do you see that man? It is Major Hakky Bey, my old enemy. He is the man. You know the story. Now once more he confronts me."

Aryan raised his glasses and scrutinized the man. He took careful measurement of his physical strength. He was satisfied. The Major was not a weakling. A fierce expression manifested itself on Aryan's face. He remained motionless in deep thought for a moment. Then tearing a page from his note book, he wrote on it in French:

"Major Hakky Bey; My name is Levon, I have a personal account to settle with you. It concerns the Armenian nurse who cared for your sick wife. I challenge you to a duel, with whatever weapon you prefer —pistols or swords, or unarmed if you so choose—on neutral ground, in the presence of both armies."

He folded the paper, tied it to a piece of stone and calling Karekin, gave it to him: "Go down this hill and hide behind that projection. When you see Turkish soldiers approaching, throw this stone and tell them it is for the commander."

Aryan and Arusag stood there watching Karekin closely, guarding him with their guns. After a few minutes he returned, running from boulder to boulder to avoid the Turkish fire.

Less than half an hour had passed, when a soldier was seen coming up the hill with a white flag. Karekin once more went down in the same way and brought the answer: "The Commander of the Imperial Ottoman Army would consider

it beneath his dignity to measure strength with a common rebel. I have come to arrest you. Wisdom would dictate that you surrender without compelling me to shed your blood. Signed, Hakky Bey."

Aryan gave the paper to Arusag, mounted his horse and went around on a tour of inspection of the positions. Arusag and Karekin followed him.

Gradually one side of the hill was covered with Turkish soldiers; the side which was relatively more accessible to the top. The Major had no knowledge of the strength of the insurgents. He felt contempt for the Armenians as fighters. He viewed the whole situation with a scornful eye. Therefore, ignoring all precautions, he ordered a general assault. Aryan's tactics were always to wait for the enemy until he came near enough to shoot with ease. A pistol shot from the watch tower gave the signal to fire. Within a second the entire face of the hill was alive with men. The incessant volleys soon cleared the advanced ranks of the Turks. From the valley further down the bugle sounded for advance. The firing extended from one end of the line of battle to the other. A body of Kurdish horsemen was trying to force its way into the plateau from the rear on the eastern side where the ground was rocky. This was foreseen and the place had been strongly fortified. Horses and riders fell among the boulders as soon as they appeared.

At about ten o'clock the battle was raging fiercely. Several charges were repulsed successfully. The Turks formed storming parties and tried to find the vulnerable points in the defenses. Everywhere they met unflinching opposition.

Aryan was going from position to position, encouraging his men. "Keep calm and cool. Ours is the victory. The enemy shows signs of weakness. He has many casualties."

The sun had just passed the meridian when it was observed that the Turkish firing slowed down noticeably. Aryan did not believe that the enemy was retiring. He would not give way so easily. It was a ruse. Through his field glasses he surveyed the entire battle front. There was a commotion towards the south. Leaping on his horse, he hastened to the place. The Turks had concentrated their firing on that point from a comparatively safe position. They had found a depression in the side of the mountain, and from behind projecting rocks they were battering the southernmost entrenchment. This flanking attack disconcerted the defenders. The Armen-

ians were fighting desperately, but could not hold their ground under the heavy pressure of the enemy. They were gradually retreating.

Aryan arrived just in time. He sent Karekin to the center, to tell Miroyan to bring his company. As soon as they came, he told them to dismount and follow him. The retiring defenders, seeing help coming to them, renewed their efforts and increased their resistance. Aryan led the newcomers through dangerous but passable ways up to a higher elevation behind the Turkish position. It was a precarious location, hardly a place for a foothold. Clinging to wild brushwood, each man found a lodgment for himself.

"Fire!" came the voice of command. The Turks were overwhelmed with consternation. No one could stand against the devastating storm of bullets. Volley after volley swept the platform. They left their position precipitately, leaving many dead behind them.

The Turkish soldiers, in their haste to seek safe refuge, were completely disorganized. They ran here and there in confusion and unwittingly became open targets. When the place was cleared, Aryan led his men down the mountain side to search for fugitives. Some were hiding behind big boulders and were caught and put to death. A captain, with about a score of soldiers, surrendered.

"Drop your guns on the ground and hold up your hands," commanded Aryan. He detailed half a dozen of his followers to escort the prisoners to the center. Meanwhile the battle was still going on intermittently at various points. He turned his attention to these places. With his reserve force, he visited the station where activity prevailed. It was not difficult to rout the Turks in their present demoralized condition.

At about four o'clock in the afternoon, the fighting diminished appreciably. Gradually the field was cleared.

Aryan took with him a number of men and went down to inspect the field of battle and to collect the rifles of the dead soldiers. While he was busy with this work, some of the followers drew his attention to a group of Turks behind the shelter of a rock not far away. They were occupied with a wounded person and trying to administer first aid. Aryan approached them carefully. It was the Major, lying in the shadow, unconscious. He was badly wounded. Arusag at once drew near and told the men to remove his coat. The wound was exposed. A

bullet had entered his chest just above the heart, and lodged under the skin at the back. From a small case of medical necessities which she carried with her, Arusag took a roll of sterilized cotton, and with the help of the men, tied it tightly on the injured place. Then they carried him, on an improvised stretcher, to the camp.

All of the prisoners were gathered in a cave and guarded by two men, who were told to shoot any who attempted to escape.

Each captain was ordered to call the roll of his men. The Armenian casualties were fifteen dead and about twenty wounded.

While Aryan and the other men were occupied with various duties of the camp, Arusag was left alone with the wounded and unconscious Major. Once more she examined him and found that the cotton needed changing. She put out her hand to open the case. She hesitated: "Why should I take so much trouble for him," she thought. "Here he is, my enemy. He is at my mercy. Should I help him? Would it be right to use these precious materials for an enemy when they are needed for our own wounded. Vengeance is sweet. It is not necessary to put a knife into his heart. If he were left to his fate, without aid from me, the injury would do its work. The blood would flow to the last drop and reduce the unconscious body to a corpse."

There was another voice, however, speaking from the bottom of her heart. "A fallen enemy deserves compassion, he is worthy of help." The question was not how the Turk would behave under the same conditions. Her innate good heartedness, her Christian education, and perhaps a little of the inalienable mercy of her sex, united to defeat the temptation.

While she was proceeding with the work of changing the dressing, the Major unconsciously lifted his hand and put it on the wound. Arusag was once more agitated. She saw the scar which her bullet had left. Her memory awakened. Her thoughts went back to the scene, when every entreaty, every word of persuasion, every appeal to his sense of honor, fell on the deaf ears of the passion-maddened man, until she was compelled to defend herself with a gun. She remembered the time, when escaping from the house, she had heard the Major

rap out a quick command to his orderly to bring her back dead or alive.

Hakky Bey gradually opened his eyes. He asked for water. After drinking, he once more fell on his back, insensible to his surroundings. The movement had caused him pain. Arusag put one or two drops of stimulant in his mouth. After a while consciousness returned. He looked around and slowly realized the situation. "I presume that the Armenians have won the battle and have taken me prisoner," he said in a weak voice. "I am fatally wounded and cannot last long. It is better so. I must confess that the Armenians fought well and were skillfully marshaled. Who is their leader?"

"Levon is our commander," answered Arusag.

"What! Levon? That notorious rebel?" he exclaimed.

"Levon is not a rebel," said Arusag, more vehemently than the occasion warranted. "He is a man of high education, speaks several languages, and is an architect by profession. He has relinquished his career to devote himself to the sacred cause of national freedom. He is a virtuous and patriotic Armenian."

He did not continue the discussion. Thinking that he was at the mercy of his enemy, he changed his tone and spoke in a more conciliatory mood. "Who bandaged my wound?" he asked, when he noticed that it was done.

"I did," She answered.

"Are you a doctor?"

"No, I am a trained nurse."

"Why do you take such care of me? You will no doubt demand a large ransom for me from the government."

"I do not think so. At any rate, the commander has not said anything about it. When I saw you bleeding and unconscious, I took the responsibility upon myself and saved your life."

"It is no use. I shall be shot, if not ransomed, when my rank is known."

"The commander knows who you are."

"He will kill me, after subjecting me to torture."

"He is not a Turk."

Hakky turned a fierce glance at Arusag and attempted to get up. Unable to do so, he lay down on his side and was silent.

"I advise you not to move," said Arusag. "If your bandage is displaced, your life will be in danger."

"I prefer to die in this way, rather than fall into the hands of savages," he replied.

"We are not savages," she replied, her temper rising. "I warn you once more to be careful and to control your tongue. If you behave yourself, you will get better treatment. Turkish methods do not work here."

This time the Major shut his eyes and pretended sleep, but he was not asleep. He was thinking. This man's voice, face and conduct reminded him of a person he had known. He wondered if he was related to her. Perhaps he was her brother.

After a while he suddenly inquired: "Have I seen you before?"

"Perhaps."

"Where?"

Just then Aryan was seen coming towards them with a few of his followers. There was no more chance to continue the conversation. Arusag, as his body guard, ran to hold the bridle of the horse and help him to dismount.

"Is the Major able to eat, Armen?" asked Aryan.

"He can eat a small amount, I think," she answered.

Karekin took the wounded man some bread and water. He refused the bread but drank the water. He had lost much blood and was feeling thirsty.

Food was also distributed among the other prisoners.

Arusag went away to attend to the Armenian wounded. There were only two or three serious cases. The rest were injured only slightly. She dressed and plastered, as the condition of the damage required.

After supper, Aryan came to the Major and asked him how he was feeling. Without replying, he looked his adversary up and down, and noticed his strong and muscular constitution.

"Now I understand why you were challenging me to a personal combat," he said. "You may be physically stronger than I am, but you cannot compete with me in the art of war. I am no doubt defeated in this encounter, but I was misinformed as to your number and position. I am reputed as a good strategist. You cannot vanquish me in an open field with twice your number."

Aryan smiled and said: "That might be true. You are a trained soldier. You have studied and practiced the tactics of warfare. You know scientifically how to dispose and maneuver military forces for battle. I claim no such education. My knowledge in such matters is limited. I am an architect by profession. In following that line, I had occasion to study the construction of fortifications, natural and artificial. I am only an amateur fighter."

Then turning to Arusag, he asked: "How is his wound? Can he travel on horseback?"

"Not very long. He is not mortally hurt. With a small operation, the bullet could be removed. After that, the wound will heal rapidly."

In the evening, at the bugle call, all the captains, after setting sentries at each position, repaired to the center of the camp with their available men, for military consultation. There were two questions to be settled. First to decide the fate of the prisoners. Second, to lay down a plan for future activity. Aryan was presiding. When the first topic was mentioned, it could be seen and felt that the great majority of those who were present were inclined to take drastic action against the captives. The problem was discussed heatedly. Some demanded their wholesale execution. Khachik, a fiery young man, said: "The Turks would have done the same to us. If we had fallen in their hands, would our lives be spared? We should treat them as they would have treated us. I believe in the law of 'eye for eye'."

Many others expressed the same sentiments.

Caspar of Sassoon, who had been an eye-witness to the massacres in his native town, shouted: "These men should be tortured and put to death. If you appoint me as executioner, you will see what I can do. And if you have no heart to see, shut your eyes while I mete out justice. Remember the inhuman and barbarous manner in which they butchered our unarmed and helpless people."

Aryan did not like the tone of the last speaker. "My friend, that is not vindication of justice. I feel as you all do that if we were vanquished instead of the victors, our lives would not be spared. Beware of blood thirstiness! Just punishment does not include vindictiveness. We have fought a regular battle today. Let us not violate the laws of civilized

warfare, according to which the prisoners are not put to death."

"No, I do not agree," cried Caspar once more. "I am for retaliation."

Upon this, Mesrobe Vartanian from Constantinople, a college graduate, addressed the company: "Comrades, we must not be carried away by tempestuous passion and ungovernable sentiments. We are fighting for a sacred cause. Retaliation? Yes! Barbarity? No! To me it is revolting to slaughter an unresisting human being in cold blood. The statements of some of the speakers are perfectly true. The Turkish government has treated us inhumanly. It has stirred up the Mohammedan hordes against us and encouraged them to massacre our compatriots. No one can deny that. It is not the first time that "The Unspeakable Turk" has followed his savage instinct of bloodshed and rapacity. Read the history of the wars of independence of Greece and Bulgaria. But we cannot lower ourselves to the same level. How could the blood of these two dozen Turks give us more satisfaction when on the other side of the surrounding hills hundreds of corpses lie on the ground as a memorial to our courage and ability to fight honorably. What advantage could we have by adding a score more of them. Then consider the feelings of Christian nations. The European consuls will no doubt investigate the happenings of today and send their reports to their respective governments. We do not want to be considered as uncivilized. And again, when these prisoners are released and go back alive to relate the treatment they received at our hands, the Turks will realize the magnanimous way in which we deal with our defenseless enemies. One of the speakers referred to the murders committed in the prison of Sivas. No one knows better about that crime than our commander. He also would have been murdered mercilessly, if he had not bravely defended himself and his fellow prisoners. No, my friends, our arms have won a glorious victory today, honorably in open warfare. Do not let us tarnish our unsullied reputation by an unworthy act."

The fate of the prisoners was settled in their favor.

In the matter of the location of the camp, there was no difference of opinion. The place was no longer tenable after the day's battle. A larger army would be sent to blockade and starve them. It was decided to relinquish it that night and seek another suitable camping ground and postpone further

action until then. They had enough horses and ammunition. They divided the rifles and the cartridges captured from the enemy, and collecting their more valuable possessions, made arrangements to depart at nine o'clock.

An oath was administered to Hakky Bey, on his military honor, never again to pursue the revolutionaries.

At the appointed time, the cavalcade started wending its way up the hills, down the valleys. The long line of horsemen was swallowed up in darkness.

Arusag once more changed the Major's bandages and went to get ready herself for departure.

Hakky Bey asked Aryan who that young man was.

"Why do you want to know?" asked Aryan.

"It seems to me that I must have seen him before, but search my memory as I do, I cannot place him."

"If you learned of his identity and of his past life, would you betray him?" asked Aryan.

The Major was offended. "Did I not swear on my honor that I would not work against your nationals. You do not take me as a man of his word, then. I have sworn to be your friend, and I mean it. I have changed my mind about the quality and the capacity of the men who have devoted themselves to a national cause. Do not mistake me, Levon Effendi. The interest I take in that young man is personal. He saved my life today from certain death. Do you think that I would be mean enough to harm the person to whom I owe my life? You do not know me. I tell you that after this, my relationship with you and through you, with the Armenian revolutionaries, will be one of friendship."

At that time they saw Arusag coming toward them. Aryan said: "Armen, the Major wants to know who you are. He thinks that he has seen you before. Shall I tell him?"

"I have no objection. You can do so."

"But I would rather that you tell him."

Arusag came nearer and stood before them. Removing her military cap and other marks of disguise, she said: "Hakky Bey, do you remember Arusag, the Armenian nurse, who was taking care of your sick wife, Zakiah Hanum, when you were living in Marsovan?"

Hakky Bey was amazed. For a long time he could not speak. He watched the transformation. How handsome the girl looked in her boy's clothing. He was deeply moved. He

tried to control his agitation, but it was not easy under his present weakened condition. He felt dizzy and put out his hand to hold the rock to save himself from falling. Aryan helped him. After a while when he regained his strength he said: "You saved my life. What was your motive?"

"I had no motive. When I saw you bleeding to death, as a nurse I considered it my duty to stop it."

"But I was your enemy; I had done you harm."

"We have been taught from childhood to return good for evil, when the question is personal."

He did not seem to understand. "But I had told my orderly to bring you back, dead or alive."

"Yes, I heard you. That was the reason why an innocent life was sacrificed. Of course, I had to kill him to save my life and honor."

"I had guessed it. I knew your ability to shoot straight by experience." He looked at the indelible disfigurement on his hand.

"I could not help it. I warned you."

"Are you the wife of Levon Effendi?"

"No. I am affianced to him to be married one day, if a Turkish bullet does not put an end to our lives."

"Excuse my impertinence, but do you live a clean life together like this, fighting side by side?"

"Absolutely!" she answered.

Such a situation seemed inconceivable to a Turk. It was beyond his comprehension.

"Has the Armenian nation many sons and daughters like you and Levon Effendi?"

"Yes, many, but the Turkish government is planning to destroy them."

Hakky Bey bent his head in deep thought. "It is a pity," he said, "I wish a way could be found out of this difficulty and Turks and Armenians could live together peacefully and fraternally on this land of our common inheritance. What is your objective in this rebellion, Levon Effendi? What is the aim of the revolutionaries?"

"We simply desire to live like human beings," answered Aryan, "with all their ordinary privileges. You must admit that the government is not what it should be. The great majority of the officials are ignorant and unfit for their positions. You are a young Turk, Hakky Bey. You will understand me,

when I say that absolute monarchy and despotism will not work in this enlightened century. It cannot be accepted by a progressive community. I will not speak of the sufferings endured by our people. What is the cause for the order for a general massacre of the Armenians, issued from the highest authority? Simply because our leaders in the capital planned, through the intervention of the ambassadors, to acquire the right of national self-determination. You are a brave man, Major. You will allow that, unless a man is a depraved coward, he will fight an assailant with all his might and means. Self-defense is a sacred prerogative."

Hakky Bey again bent his head and did not answer. Then turning to Arusag, he said: "Mademoiselle, it will sound inadequate when I say 'Thank you a thousand times.' You have not only saved my life, but also you have made me a different man by your noble behavior."

He asked Aryan to order his horse. "I must go. I feel weak and faint."

Karekin brought the horse and between them, they helped him to mount.

Arusag produced a small bottle of stimulant and said, "If through the loss of blood you feel faint, drink a few drops from this. Your strength will be restored."

"May I shake hands with you, Levon Effendi?" Aryan put out his hand immediately.

"And with you, Mademoiselle?"

When Arusag put up her hand, the Major bent his head so low that his lips touched her fingers. He turned the head of his horse without looking up and hastened toward the city. He soon disappeared in the darkness.

Arusag felt a hot drop on her hand.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

I AM DEPORTED TO OURFA

*Smiling, sweet village, loveliest of the lawn,
Thy sports are fled and all thy charms withdrawn:
Amidst thy bowers the tyrant's hand is seen,
And desolation saddens all thy green:
One only master grasps the whole domain,
And half a tillage stints thy smiling plain.*

GOLDSMITH

Two weeks after the fighting in Sivas, the head jailer informed me that I was to be sent to Ourfa, my birthplace. The news was not encouraging. I would fain leave this horrible dog-hole, but how could I arrive safely at my native town, while the whole country ran riot with blood and fire.

"How am I going to travel?" I asked.

"By walking, of course," he answered.

"Walking! How can I walk as far as Ourfa, a matter of fifteen days journey?"

"I cannot help that," he said. "The government is not prepared to hire a carriage for you. There is no other way. The order has come to me and I must obey. You start at once."

"The roads are not safe. It is dangerous to travel at this time."

"Never fear, a zaptiah will accompany you."

There was no use arguing. I asked to see Mr. Perry, the missionary. That good American tried hard to persuade the officials to spare me such a long journey on foot. They would not agree. He applied to the Vali with the same result. At last he asked them if he could lend his horse to me. They consented.

On the following morning, Mr. Perry's horse was waiting at the gate, with two zaptiahs on horseback.

When I was ready to start, I called on Hassan Effendi and requested he pay me the balance of the money sent by the church in Marsovan. The whole sum was six Turkish pounds, of which I had only spent a few majidiahs. (Five majidiahs make a Turkish pound.) He put his hand in his pocket and brought out one majidiah and gave it to me. I looked at him astonished.

"Where is the rest of the money?"

With an ugly frown, he said, "I warn you not to speak too much; or else I will take back what I have given you."

"But I cannot travel all that distance with one majidiah in my pocket."

"Your escorts will take care of your necessities. One majidiah is enough until you arrive at your destination."

"But the money is mine, I demand it!"

He got up from his chair and called one of the wardens and told him to put a pair of iron handcuffs on my wrists. This was a punishment for my daring speech. I submitted quietly. What else could I do. Corruption has penetrated into the bone and marrow of Turkish officials.

It was the beginning of December. The weather was bitterly cold. One of the men led the horse, another followed. I could not use my hands to hold the reins. When we came out of the city and began ascending the neighboring hills, the cold became intense. The sky was overcast. By and by snow flakes came down sparsely. Gradually they increased in volume. They fell on my bare hands and face. I could not brush them off. I shivered. The rough edges of the iron cuffs pierced my flesh. They stopped the circulation of the blood. My hands were swollen; the fingers turned purple. With every movement of the horse, a sharp pain shot through my arms. The situation was getting desperate. If this continued much longer, I would lose the use of my hands. They were already numb.

I asked the zaptiah to take off the cuffs. "I will not run away," I said. He laughed: "Where will you run on these mountains and in such weather. The first Turk that meets you will finish you. Besides, you do not look like a man who would try to escape. Those cuffs were put on for a purpose."

I knew. They wanted money.

"I will give you all I have—a majidiah," I said.

"It is too little," he answered. "When we get higher up in a colder climate, you will be more generous."

"But I have no money. There is only one majidiah in my pocket."

"You do not say so! Then where is that money we heard was sent you from the Hunchagists in Marsovan?"

"It was not from the Hunchagists. It was from my church. But Hassan effendi kept it. He gave me only one majidiah. (Thinking, no doubt, that I would not need it, traveling

under the protection of the government.) You can search me. Whatever you find you can have."

They looked at each other and then looked at me. They were evidently convinced and closed the bargain. They took the majidiah and released my hands. They were almost frozen.

At the next stopping place my escorts were changed. This time, I was traveling with one zaptiah. I tried to win his friendship, but how? I had no money to bribe him with. I gave him my watch.

The change of escorts from town to town made my position more difficult. Hardly had I gained the favor of one, when next day, another would take his place. Having nothing to give to them, I had to depend upon their good nature to treat me humanely.

During this journey, we passed through deserted Armenian villages without stopping. It was distressing to witness the result of the recent carnage. Everywhere dismal scenery met my eyes. Ruined houses, tumbled-down rooms and barns, neglected gardens and orchards, indicated the handiwork of ruthless barbarism. In some instances the marks of hard struggle and much bloodshed could be detected. One time populous and productive districts were now abandoned. The only inhabitants that remained were the village dogs attracted by unburied corpses. Not a sign of furniture could be seen anywhere. Even the doors and windows had been removed and carried away. The usual course was followed: the men were butchered and the women were carried away. Goldsmith's description had been enacted literally. "Smiling Villages," that could be compared with a paradise were transformed into a desert. The only structure that had successfully resisted the ravages, were the ancient churches with their thick and heavy walls.

Once, only, we halted in an Armenian village at midday, to rest and to eat, in a clump of trees where a spring of clear water made the place attractive. After the meal the zaptiah stretched himself in the sun and relaxed. I sauntered away among the ruined houses, trying to picture before my mind the tragedies enacted in them so recently. I met a solitary man with tearful eyes, searching in his once happy home to see if anything had escaped the plunderer. He told me he had been away on business during the massacre and on his return, he found that he was the only inhabitant of the village. He was

ignorant of the fate of his wife and children. He did not know whether they were all killed or carried away. This was one of the few Armenian communities which fought valiantly against odds to save their homes and for a time actually succeeded. Led by a group of young revolutionaries and directed by the pastor from the roof of his church, they defended themselves for many days until the hordes of Kurds and Arabs retired to seek more easy prey elsewhere. But the government did not relish this 'rebellion.' A few days later, with a better organized force, they destroyed the entire village, put the men to the sword and deported the women and children.

We frequently sojourned in Kurdish or Turkish hamlets. The guest chamber of the headman was always open to visitors. It was the meeting place of the villagers, who gathered there to spend the evenings in neighborly fellowship. These days the subject of conversation was the general massacre of the Christians. They did not understand what it was all about, but one thing was plain to them, the lives and the possessions of the Armenians of the vicinity were forfeited to them. They had plenty to say. Having just returned from the foray, they proudly related their heroic experiences. How many defenseless men they had murdered; how much plunder they had brought home; the beautiful girls they had captured. My blood boiled with anger, listening to these vicious stories, as I crouched helplessly in one corner.

Often, they inquired about me. Different zaptiahs would give different answers. In order to save me from these wild and bloodthirsty vilains, they told lies. One would deny my nationality and give me a Greek name. Another would represent me as a loyal Armenian, going back to his own native town under the special protection of the Sultan.

Once I met a Turkish functionary from Constantinople in the guest room of a village. He could not be fooled. At once he recognized me as one of the Armenian political prisoners. He looked at me keenly and began to discuss international questions—I knew where that would lead and remained silent. Then he talked about the recent uprising of the Armenians, their dissatisfaction and the demand for the reformation of the six vilayets. Still I would not be drawn into the trap. Then he asked me point blank what was the cause of my imprisonment.

"I do not know."

"You do not know? How is that?"

"Because I was never tried."

He ordered the zaptiah, my escort, to give him the papers belonging to my indictment. He read them through. "I see. You are a leader of the Armenian revolutionaries."

"I am not!" I said, with emphasis.

"Evidently you are not the dangerous kind," he continued, ignoring my denial. "Otherwise they would have done away with you long ago."

He seemed well-informed on the Armenian question. He went back to our former patriarchs, mentioning them by name and holding them responsible for the revolutionary movement. He declared that Varjabedian and Izmirlian were traitors against the government for appealing to foreign powers and should have been executed publicly, to set a salutary example for the others. He mentioned these revered names with obscene adjectives. Casting all caution to the winds, I tried to defend their actions under the circumstances and reminded him that they were the highest officials in our community, were ordained men of God and should not be spoken of disrespectfully. He lost his temper and shouted at me to be quiet and poured out a string of curses and blasphemies on my head.

He suddenly stood up and came towards me with a threatening mien. "You Armenian traitor! You dare contradict me? You should have been hanged at Sivas. Your whole nation should be exterminated."

He raised his hand to strike. I did not move. Just then the young son of the chief of the village entered. He was holding a pistol in his hand and he silently offered it to him. The Turk took the revolver, looked at it, looked at me and then came to himself. Shaking his head, he returned the weapon and went back to his place.

On my journey south, I came to a small town called Bakkermadenee, where there was a copper mine, I suppose, according to the indication of the name. As I passed through the business quarter, crowds of people, Turks and Armenians, lined the streets and gazed at me. They were speculating who I was and for what evil doings I was being deported.

My escort led me straight to the prison; and what a prison! The whole atmosphere reeked with a nauseating odor. The warden took me through the main inclosure to an inner

cell. When he opened the door, I could not see the inside, it was so dark. Gradually my eyes grew accustomed to the darkness and I could distinguish a hole, twelve feet by fourteen, where three prisoners were confined. He pushed me in and locked the door behind me. I was left alone with my fellow prisoners. They surrounded me and asked for tobacco. I said I did not smoke. Give money, then, to send for it. "All my money is gone," I answered, "taken away from me." They felt my pockets and found none. With disgust, they shoved me aside.

From their conversation I gathered that they were all desperate criminals. One of them was convicted of murder. They all looked capable of committing the worst kind of felony. I dreaded to be shut up in company with such characters.

When the time came to distribute the rations, a small loaf of bread was given to each of us, the earthen water jug was filled for common use, and the tin Kerosene lamp hanging on the wall was lit. It smoked dreadfully. The sooty fumes, mixed with the loathsome smell of the dirty bodies of the men, in such proximity, made breathing difficult.

I did not eat the bread nor drink water, although I was hungry and thirsty. It made me sick to see them take up the jug and drink from it in turn.

Sleep did not visit me that night. During all the time of my incarceration, in fact I can say, during all the years of my life, I never spent such an awful night. As I leaned against the wall I watched my companions. No movement, no word escaped my attention. What would prevent these malefactors from strangling me in my sleep; not that I was safe even when wide awake. Was it not kismet (fate) that had led me into their clutches. Outside, hundreds of giaours are slaughtered; should they not have their share in rendering service to Allah by killing a Christian?

I remembered once, when I was a youngster, I had dreamed that I was shut up in a cave filled with poisonous snakes. It was horrible. The companionship of these criminals gave me the same sensation. My eyes never closed. My lungs were filled with the vitiated air. I felt faint, but the danger of the situation kept me alert and watchful. By and by, they stretched themselves on the ground and slept. The sound of their snoring was music to my ears. I passed the time in this position until morning.

At last the door of the cell opened and a gruff voice ordered us out for our morning necessities. I stood in the middle of the courtyard and raised my arms to Heaven and prayed. The tears ran down my cheeks. I could not control them. My nerves were rendered powerless; I was hysterical.

After a while the warm rays of the sun sobered me and restored my mental calmness. A deep sigh escaped from my lungs. I lifted up my voice and thanked God that He made me once more to see His glorious sun.

I approached one of the jailers and asked him to take me to the governor. I had something important to tell him.

"He is not here. He has not come yet," he said. "It is too early."

I entreated him not to return me to that same cell. "Allow me to remain here in the open air, till he arrives."

He let me stay and showed me a seat near the wall.

When the governor arrived, I was taken to his office. My desperate position endowed me with boldness. I stood there before him, not as a prisoner, but as a questioner: "Kaimakam Bey, what have I done that I am treated in this manner. Am I a robber? Have I committed murder, that I should share a room with robbers and murderers? I have so far, been treated by the government with all the respect due my rank and station. Why am I subjected to such indignity in this town?"

The Kaimakam was a young man about my age with a sympathetic and open face. He was looking at me attentively during my short speech. When I finished speaking, he took up the parcel which contained the papers of my indictment from the table in front of him, and began to read.

After a while he looked up again and offered me a chair.

"I see that you are a preacher and an educated man. I am going to talk to you without reserve. The Armenian revolutionaries are making a big mistake in taking a separatist attitude in their quarrel with the government. Even a child can see that in your present scattered condition, you cannot win independence. There is a strong dissatisfied element amongst us too. The Young Turkish Party is trying to change the existing system and introduce reformation in the monarchy. But as long as the Armenians are endeavoring to divide the country, they cannot expect our sympathy. If they would keep quiet and wait patiently, or better still, support our ven-

ture, we will be able to bring about the necessary improvements by which the Ottoman races will be benefited."

When I understood that he belonged to the Young Turkish Party and did not entertain hostile feelings against us, I took heart and explained to him that I was not a leader of the revolutionaries and was not connected with any party. My imprisonment was based on a misunderstanding. Some of the officials in Marsovan, suspecting my influence with the younger men to be seditious, had planned my removal from that city. "Like you, I believe that our government needs reformation, but I do not take an active part in the movement. Politics is beyond the sphere of my duties. To tell the truth, I am opposed to any forcible change in the land. Improvement should be achieved by peaceful means."

"That cannot always be done. Sometimes one is constrained to arrive at an objective by force of arms. But I was referring to the Plan of Reformation for the six villayets, which was sponsored by the highest authority in your nation. Why reformation for six villayets only? Why not for the whole country? If it was necessary to solicit the foreign powers, which is considered treasonable in some quarters, why put distinction between the Armenians and other races? Are we not all Ottomans? Do we not all suffer from the same mismanagement?"

To answer these questions would have taken me too far into the discussion of dangerous political matters and imperil my position, I refrained from reasoning with him, because the man was a Turk, although an enlightened one. I requested that I be sent off on my journey as soon as possible. I was not returned to the prison. He ordered that immediate arrangements be made to expedite my departure.

Another time I was crossing the mountains of the southern part of the Taurus range. The ground was covered with thick snow. The air was cold and crisp. The sun was high in the sky, but its warmth was not strong enough to penetrate my chilled body. My hands were frost bitten; my feet would not get warm. I was shivering. Suddenly I saw four horsemen coming up from behind an elevation in front of me. My escort, with whom I had made friends as usual, saw them too. He knew at once who they were. Turning to me he said: "Be calm and fear not; take a free and easy attitude. Do not show

in any way that you are an Armenian. When they speak, do not answer. I will take care of them."

When the horsemen came nearer, I could see that they were Kurds. Their leader ordered us to stop. His followers stood in a line along the highway, holding their rifles. He spoke to the zaptiah: "Who is this giaour?"

"What did you say? Giaour! Giaour yourself!" retorted my companion. "How dare you speak disrespectfully of an official of the government, by calling him giaour?" And he actually directed his gun towards him.

"Proceed, Effendim." This was addressed to me.

"Wait a minute," said the chief of the Kurds. Looking at me, he asked, "What is your name?"

Without giving me a chance to speak, my custodian replied: "What will you do with his name? You see I am a policeman performing my duty, under the shadow of his majesty the Sultan, as a safeguard to one of his office-bearers. You know what it means to resist an officer of the law."

I admired the daring and the coolness of the man. He was so ready and quick in his repartee, that the marauders were confused and did not know what to make of him. He signed me to move on. Standing before them for a minute or two, gun in hand, hurling defiance at them, he turned and followed me. His courageous deportment had saved my life. I did not know how to express my gratitude. I had no money or any valuables to give him. Looking behind, I could see that the robbers were moving in the opposite direction. I took a long breath.

"Who were those men?" I asked.

"They are Kurdish highwaymen out in search of victims. They kill and rob and plunder," he answered.

"If you had not shown courage and daring, they would have killed me. I owe my life to you. I am sorry that I have nothing with which to compensate you. But I promise that when I arrive safely in Ourfa, I will reward you."

At the top of the next hill, I looked back. There was no one following us. My companion said, "Do you know what I was told in Diarbekir, when I was detailed to escort you? They told me it was not necessary to take so much trouble with a giaour. Finish him in a convenient place on the way and say that the Kurds attacked and killed him. But I am a conscien-

tious man and fear Allah. I cannot murder a human being who has done me no harm."

These words made me pause and think. There are men, then, among the Turks, of virtuous and sterling qualities. This was not vacuous boasting; the man had proved his moral integrity and nobleness of heart in an undeniable manner. What better chance could be given to test his rectitude than the one presented to him, when the robbers were actually ready to carry out the order of his superior officers, if he would only stand aside, without reddening his hand with my blood! We should not, then, condemn the whole race as bloodthirsty wolves. The massacres are mostly the result of mob rule, stirred and authorized by the rotten government. This man's conduct convinced me that there must be many individual Turks, who fear God and would not willingly shed innocent blood.

A short time after this incident, the government mail carriers met us, going in the same direction. We joined the party and under its protection, we arrived safely at our next stopping place.

My last station was Severack, a small town, about two days' journey from Ourfa. There again my escort was changed. This time it happened that he was a Circassian by race, an amiable man. From his conversation I learned that he was not a lover of the Turk. Born and brought up in the Caucasus and having come into contact with more civilized nations, he considered the Turks and the Kurds nothing but savages. He had known many Armenians in his own country, some of them intimately. A comradeship was established between us.

In the evening we halted in a Kurdish village. As usual we went to the guest chamber of the chief, who was a patriarchal old man, with a long white beard and a benevolent countenance. Soon after, a crowd composed mostly of young men, gathered in the hall. I did not like their looks. Their aspect was menacing. They were restless—continually coming and going. They talked in whispers. Through the window I saw a group of men in secret consultation, gesticulating and pointing a thumb towards me. I was agitated. They were hatching a plot against me; it was plain. My companion suspected this too. While he conversed with the old man, his attention was attracted to the movements of the villagers. The chief noticed our uneasiness. He got up from his place and went out, calling some of his men after him. He told them

something in Kurdish none of us could understand. But from his mode of speech, it was obviously an angry threat. When he came back, he told us the following story.

“You know that the country is in a tumult. Traveling is not safe. There have been fighting between the Mohammedans and Christians. In a recent encounter in Ourfa, one of our men was killed. Since then his relatives and friends are filled with a fury of vengeance. They were waiting for a chance to retaliate. A short time later a young Armenian merchant was passing through the village, unaware of the precarious condition of the land. He was at once attacked and robbed of all his possessions. He had a considerable amount of money on him. After looting everything, they stripped him and led him to that clump of trees over there and were going to murder him. I heard of it just in time. I went to the place of execution. A young man, well built and good looking, was standing in the middle of these killers to be sacrificed in vindictiveness for their dead friend. When he saw me, he appealed to me to save his life. While I was uncertain what to do, he had the presence of mind to take off the ring from his finger and putting it on my finger, said, “Now I am your son; you have to protect me.” He was clever. It touched my heart. I drew my sword and faced the crowd. I told them to scatter. ‘You hounds, go! Your friend was killed in a fair fight. This man has done you no harm.’ None dared to raise a hand. They are all my men; most of them are related to me. I led the Armenian to my house, restored his clothes and offered him food.

“In the night, I heard a stir outside the window. I got up and peered through the darkness. Some of the men were trying to force an entrance into the room where my guest was sleeping, to kidnap him, no doubt. I shouted at them and they ran away. I did not sleep after that. Towards morning before twilight, when everybody was in bed, I woke the young man and took him to another village in the vicinity where my sister is living, and told her to hide him. I kept him there in hiding for twenty-three days. After quiet was restored a little and the roads were safer, I put him on my donkey and led him to the city and delivered him to his people, who were thinking him already dead. You should have seen their joy. They did not know how to show their gratitude. They loaded me with presents. The men kissed my beard, the women kissed my

hands, again and again. They would not let me return. They entertained me for three days and fed me most lavishly.

"My men have not forgiven me for snatching their victim from their hands. They are looking for other prey. But be not afraid; they cannot touch you. They are all my dogs; I can hold them in leash."

This story, instead of reassuring me, increased my anxiety. How can a feeble old man restrain a score of wild wolves hungry for vengeance! They would have many chances to fall upon me and cut me down, before the chief even heard of it. Evidently my custodian felt in the same way. He told me not to leave his side. Holding the rifle in his hand, he was unremittingly watchful. When I went out, he followed me. At last everybody retired. It was soon after midnight. He stood up and made a sign to me to accompany him. We stole out of the room silently. Our horses, saddled and ready, were teathered in the open courtyard. We leaped on them and beat a retreat in the darkness of the night. To avoid pursuit, the Circassian did not take the well known beaten track, but turned to the left, and went in a round about way, until we reached the low hills. Zigzagging through them, we hurried to put a safe distance between us and the village. The sun was just rising when we came within sight of the vineyards of the city of Ourfa, about five miles north of it. Considering ourselves in a safety zone, we dismounted and rested a little while.

I had been away from home about eight years. In ordinary times, there would be a great rejoicing on my return. I was going back, now, as a captive, a prisoner. No father, mother, brothers, friends to meet and welcome me. I had not heard from them for I did not know how long. Were they all alive? Had any of them been murdered during the massacre, which I felt sure, must have taken place in Ourfa, too?

As we approached the city, I heard the sound of firing in the distance. "What can that be?" I asked myself.

Turning to my companion. I saw that he was also listening attentively: "What do you make of it, Zaki effendi?"

"Oh, it is nothing," he said. "The Kurds in the next village are having a wedding, and, as is their custom, they are discharging their guns in the air."

I knew that there was a hamlet behind the hill on our left; I was aware also of the Moslem practice of shooting their

guns during the wedding festivities, but this seemed to be the sound of too many firearms.

The roads were deserted. There were no travelers going or coming. This was unusual. Generally there is much traffic on this main road to the city. What did all this mean?

My suspicion turned into certainty as we came nearer; a battle was in progress in Ourfa at this very hour.

Zaki stopped his horse, dismounted, faced toward Mecca and went through the motions of a Mohammedan prayer.

I also dismounted and stood beside my horse and prayed. I remembered that it was Christmas Day—the twenty-fifth day of December. It was the anniversary of the birth of Christ. The whole Christian world was celebrating it with joy and gladness, singing in the churches, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will toward men,” while, in this Moslem world, fighting and bloodshed, enmity and hatred, cursing and blasphemy were rampant among men. I prayed to the Prince of Peace, to restore peace on earth and good will toward all the races of this benighted land of ignorance, superstition and cruelty. I committed myself to His almighty arms and asked Him to give me courage to endure sufferings faithfully and martyrdom bravely, if so be His will.

When Zaki finished his prayer, he said: “This looks more serious than I thought; fighting is going on in the city.”

“What will you do?” I asked.

“What can I do?” he answered. “I will defend you until we arrive at the government house safely. After that my responsibility ends.”

“I am going to make a request, Zaki effendi. You are a good man. Last night you saved me from those murderous villagers. They would have killed me, but for your care and protection. Do not take me to the city. Allow me to run away. I am a native of this place; I know the surrounding country well. There are many caves among the mountains where I can hide myself until peace is restored. Here is my horse; take it; sell it; and keep the money. I give it to you gladly. Every foot path, every trail is well known to me around Ourfa; I can find my way easily.”

“No, it is not safe,” said Zaki. “As soon as the news of killing and plundering spreads around, hordes of Turkish and Kurdish villagers would pour into the city from all sides. Before you went very far, you would be observed and pursued.

It is better for you to put yourself in the hands of responsible officials. You will have more chance to survive as a prisoner, than as a fugitive."

I tried hard, but he would not be convinced. Later events, however, proved that he was right. A number of men who happened to be outside the city limits were caught and mercilessly butchered. Among them, several vineyardists who had gone out very early to prune their vines and who returned home in the afternoon unaware of the danger, and had walked into the death trap.

To reach the government house, we had to pass through that part of the city which is divided by a deep creek with a stone bridge over it. The massacre was at its height. The Armenians were running hither and thither, seeking safety. The Turks, with drawn swords, were chasing them. A dozen Turks after one Armenian, and the Armenian without any means of self defense. Once he was caught, no amount of entreaty was of any avail; he was killed. The dead bodies were thrown into the brook. The pious Mussulmans, before cutting the throat of their victims, invoked the help of Allah. The customary formula is: "Bissm Allah, el rahman el rahim." (In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.) To do murder without mercy, to shed the blood of a fellow human being, who cannot defend himself, in the name of a merciful God! What a travesty of religion! That is Islam through and through!

My custodian, holding the rifle in his hands, in a threatening attitude, was riding beside me. He looked this way and that and would not allow anyone to approach.

A numbness enveloped me, as if I were dreaming. What I saw could not be real. My mind would not function. The howl of the murderers, the screams and the screeches of the wounded, the moaning and the groaning of the dying sounded far away. My eyes became accustomed to the monstrosity of the scene before me. I lost feeling and sensibility.

Somehow, we passed through the mob unharmed, crossed the bridge and entered the courtyard of the serai. Zaki spoke to an official and handed him my papers. The latter glanced through them hurriedly and looked up at me. He ordered me to dismount and to follow him. He led me to one of the compartments of the prison, full of Turkish prisoners and locked me in. The place was airy and well lighted, but I did not relish the companionship of the Turks. Rapidly they gath-

ered around me and wanted to know who I was and where I was coming from. I told them I was a native of Ourfa and was coming from a far country.

"From America, eh?" one of them asked.

I did not answer.

"What is your name?"

I told them.

"How are you related to Hagop effendi?" My father was well known in business circles.

"I am his son," I replied.

My questioner smiled in an ugly fashion. He turned to his companions and said something in a low voice, which I did not understand. Instinctively a fear crept into my heart. I was sure they were planning my death. Especially one of them inspired me with loathing—a man who used to live not very far from our house just over the boundary line, in the Turkish section. From my childhood, I remembered, I dreaded the sight of this scoundrel. His left arm was paralyzed, but he was the embodiment of evil. He recognized me. With a malicious expression, he approached and asked: "You are so and so (calling me by my first name, with an unprintable adjective), are you not? This time you cannot escape me."

I did not answer.

He raised his hand to my throat. I gathered all my strength and gave him a hard knock on the head. He fell flat down on the ground. I was not going to be throttled without a struggle. All the men in the room laughed. Evidently he was not popular with them. He got up and was preparing to try again, when the door opened and a jailer made a sign to me to follow him. I breathed freely. Once more I had had a hair-breadth escape from death. He led me to another compartment which was set apart for Armenian prisoners.

The place was full; there was hardly room in which to move. They were mostly young men. Many of them well known to me, my boyhood companions. But they did not recognize me. I was so changed. Especially they did not expect to have me appear suddenly among them in prison after an absence of many years. When I spoke to them familiarly and told them who I was, they were astonished. "Good heavens! What on earth brings you back home, just on a day when hell is let loose?"

"I do not know. Providence, probably. To be killed on

my own native soil and with my own friends and relatives."

Outside, the slaughtering continued. The window looked down upon the brook. Dead bodies could be seen strewn along the embankment. Those who could escape sought protection in the courtyard of the serai. Now and then a wounded Turk would be carried on the back of another to the dispensary to be treated. I saw many familiar faces in the crowd gathered outside the prison wall.

At sunset the bugle sounded and the firing stopped.

We spent the night in a state of uncertainty. It was impossible to say what would happen to us in the morning. In all probability we would be led to the bank of the creek outside and slaughtered. I was tired and hungry. The room was crowded and suffocating. There was not even space to stretch one's self on the ground and rest. I spoke to one of my acquaintances and asked him about the members of my family. He said he heard that all of them were killed. They had gathered with several families in a neighbor's house and the Turks had discovered them and put them to the sword. Later news proved that fortunately he was misinformed. Somehow the night spent itself and at last the dawn peeped through the small window, gray and sad.

In the stillness of the morning, the boom of a gun rent the air. It was the signal to begin the bloody operation. The work was not completed to the satisfaction of the authorities. Another day of carnage started. It continued until nightfall. Two entire days of massacre and bloodshed, and then it was over. Peace was re-established.

The news of my arrival soon spread in the city. My mother came to see me. After so many years of separation, we could only look at each other at a distance through the iron bars of the prison. She told me that my father was absent from home, in Aleppo, and that all my younger brothers were safe. But our house and store had been plundered.

"Never mind," I said, "lost property can be replaced. Thank God that we have no loss of life."

After keeping me in prison for two more weeks, they liberated me when a friend of my father's bribed a Moslem to go bail for me. No Christian's pledge was acceptable. I was ordered not to leave the city and to report to the Police Headquarters once a week.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

THE MASSACRE OF OURFA

*What do these worthies
But rob and spoil, burn, slaughter, and enslave
peaceable nations, neighboring or remote,
Made captive, yet deserving freedom more
Than those their conquerors, who leave behind
Nothing but ruin wheresoever they rove,
And all the flourishing works of peace destroy;
Then swell with pride, and must be titled . . .
Great benefactors of mankind.*

MILTON

At the first outbreak of hostilities, the Armenians of Ourfa defended themselves more or less successfully, in spite of the fact that there did not exist an efficiently organized body of fighters. The revolutionary activities had not yet extended as far as this ancient capital of King Abgar, in northern Mesopotamia, about twenty miles south of which is located the Biblical City of Haran, where Abraham sojourned on his way to the land of Canaan. News traveled very slowly in Turkey. Rumors of fighting were heard now and then, but, with few exceptions, the public generally did not know what was going on in other parts of the country.

There were bands of young men in the city, who carried on an illegal business by smuggling tobacco and selling it cheaply in competition with the company which had the monopoly in this industry. They often had encounters with the patrols. One group rose to prominence by its daring acts. The leader, Bakaghenzt Abojig, had spread terror among the company's men. When he heard that the Turks were going to attack the Armenians, he gathered his followers and prepared for the fight. Soon other bands joined him. When the assault started, they began to shoot from street corners and roofs of the houses. More Moslems fell in this first attempt than Christians. Only those who were caught outside the city limits forfeited their lives. After a few unsuccessful attempts, the Turks withdrew and regular soldiers took their place. The order was not to shoot, but to stand guard. The government proclaimed peace and commanded both sides to lay down their weapons.

As in other cities, in Ourfa too, the Turkish authorities followed the usual tactics of prevarication and duplicity. They assembled the leaders of two communities with the apparent

intention of establishing peace between them. The Armenians of Ourfa were new to the game. They fell easily into the trap that was set for them. The governor expressed deep sorrow for the clash and the loss of life. He attributed the conflict to the turbulent element of the population. "Those desperate smugglers should be repressed," he said. "They have carried on their nefarious trade against the government too long. Recent events have opened the eyes of the Police Department and it is decided to clear the city of these pests. You, good and faithful subjects of the Sultan, must assist us in this work. You know who they are and where they live. If they are disarmed, no more mischief will be done. You go to the smugglers and exhort them to give up their firearms. But in order not to excite their suspicion, I will issue a proclamation, ordering all the people to surrender their weapons to avoid further disturbances. I charge you to go to every individual and make him swear on the Bible, that he has delivered all the means of combat in his possession. Admonish everybody to live quietly and to occupy himself with a lawful and useful trade."

The Armenian leaders answered, "Balee, Effendim," (Yes, Sir), and departed. They agreed with the words of the governor. They were peace-loving men. There was no reason to quarrel with their Turkish neighbors. The political cause behind this turmoil all over the country was unknown to them. Submission to the government would safeguard their lives and property, they thought. Consequently, they started to discharge the duty laid upon them with enthusiasm. The district was divided among them and each group went from house to house, advising and urging the inmates to hand over weapons of any description, to show their loyalty to the authorities. No opposition of any serious consequence was encountered. Only Abojig and his band resisted. They refused to part with their firearms. No persuasive word or threat of punishment could induce them. Abojig went so far as to declare that any one who came to his house for this purpose would be shot. Apart from that, however, a large collection of miscellaneous weapons—muskets, pistols, swords, daggers—were produced and delivered to the police department.

Two weeks after the disarming of the people, there was a commotion in the city one morning. A rumor circulated that Abojig, with his entire band and several hundred other young men were arrested secretly during the night and thrown into

prison. These were the men who had refused to give up their weapons. The leaders of the nation had betrayed them. The dwelling places of all those who had remained obdurate against moral persuasion were noted, and late at night an army of zaptiahs and volunteers had fallen upon and seized them un-awares.

This method of procedure of the leading men provoked indignation against them. Bitter resentment was expressed by the friends and relatives of the prisoners. They were considered the backbone of the community. It was through their brave defense that the city was saved from a terrible carnage. Now, the people felt helpless at the mercy of the enemy.

But the councillors did not feel that they had done wrong. It was all for the common good. These young men would stay out of mischief until the storm passed over. They would be released as soon as calm was restored. That was their argument. Nothing treasonable about that. Only they were not far-sighted enough to realize the possible results of this action. They were not traitors—not at all. Their only fault was, that after living so many years with the Turk and coming into contact with him, they had not learned the Turkish character. Especially those who had held office in the government and had a large circle of friends among them should have known better than to trust their word. However, is was perhaps providential that the lives of these young men were spared during the second outbreak—for a future reprisal.

One Friday, just a month after the first encounter, (the Moslem Sunday), an unusually large crowd gathered in the mosques for midday prayer. An agitation was noticed among them. The hojas (teachers) were preaching from the pulpits, fiery sermons against the infidels and pointing out the blissful lot of those who fall in the fight for religion. There was something in the air. The Moslems kept silent, avoiding the Christians. When this was not possible, their looks spoke volumes and clearly expressed impending calamity.

The Armenians became suspicious. They were careful not to give any cause for offense. Some of them closed their shops earlier than usual and retired to their homes.

On the following morning, Saturday, very few went downtown to do business. The market place was deserted. They were alert and watchful, ready to escape at the first sign of danger.

Soon the signal was given; the first gun was discharged from the hill on the west side of the Armenian quarter and the attack began. It was altogether a one-sided affair. The Armenians, deprived of all means of self-defense, could not resist the onslaught of the Mohammedan hordes and were cut down without mercy. They discovered too late that they had been deceived. After their weapons had been collected and the young warriors had been cast into prison, the work of butchering them had become easy. The Turkish mob entered the streets of the Armenian quarter unhindered, without fear or hesitation, and put to death unsparingly, every one they met in their progress. Even the houses were not safe. Locked doors were broken; the barricaded entrances were smashed, and the inmates were killed. Axes, swords, daggers and clubs were used. Leaders had firearms. The voice of the mullah was heard on all sides, calling upon Allah to help.

Some of the houses had underground cellars; those who could escape took refuge in them. When the Turks discovered their location, they opened the covers, brought out all the men and stabbed them to death. Even the wells, where a few persons had hidden themselves, were investigated. Large stones and other articles were thrown down to crush them. A fellow was caught. He asked for mercy. The leader told him that if he would kiss the end of his gun his life would be spared. As soon as his lips came in a level with the gun, he pulled the trigger and blew out his brains.

The women and children were not harmed. In accordance with the government orders, they were all gathered in the mosques and kept under guard. Many of the good looking young girls were kidnapped and some of them never returned to their parents, even after the massacre.

There were two big churches in Ourfa. The first and the largest was Saint Mary's Apostolical Cathedral, a sanctuary about two hundred years old. The second was the National Evangelical Church. They were both splendid, imposing structures, with high domes, marble columns and strong, massive walls. Both buildings were crammed with fugitives. Every one who could escape took refuge in one or the other of these churches. On the first day of the massacre, the mobsters did not bother themselves about them. They were too busy, slaughtering those near at hand and plundering the houses and

stores. On the second day they turned their attention to the churches.

The Evangelical Church was near the residence of the American Missionaries; only a low wall separated them. The resident missionary in Ourfa at that time was a single woman, Miss Corinne Shattuck. The convulsion and anarchy actually in existence around her, brought out the heroic nature of this woman's character. Weak and frail in constitution, she had a noble and fearless heart. Holding the American flag in her hand, Miss Shattuck stood on the threshold of her home and in their own language, ordered the mob to disperse. Could a feeble sapling prevent the mountain torrent from rushing down the valley? The blood thirsty hell hounds were daunted. They suddenly came to a stand still at the sight of this intrepid woman.

"This is an American institution," she declared, "and enjoys the protection of the American government. Whoever dares to enter it, does so at his own risk. This flag stands for a powerful army of a friendly nation. The man who tries to ignore it will run into danger of losing his life."

"But we want the Armenians," said one of the leaders of the mob. "We will not harm you. You stand one side."

"The Armenians are my people; no one can take them away from me."

"Push that woman away and let us go in," shouted one of the crowd at the back. Newcomers were continually added and the situation was getting desperate.

"You can only pass through this door over my dead body!" announced Miss Shattuck, with a voice that could be heard above the din of the rabble.

Nobody dared to take the first step. They withdrew a little way and held a consultation among themselves. Soon after, one of them separated himself from the crowd and ran towards the government house. Miss Shattuck knew the reason. They wanted to ask the permission of the higher officials to break through and enter into a foreign residence. They were afraid to take the responsibility upon themselves.

She produced a small pocket book and wrote in it: "I am murdered with the consent of the government." She was anxious to let her friends know in case the answer confirmed the desired assault.

Evidently the word brought back was favorable for her. The rabble scattered. The church with all its multitudes of refugees was saved.

The fate of the cathedral was not so fortunate. It did not have outside protection. About two thousand souls were packed in the huge building, mostly women and children. They were left at the mercy of the enemy.

St. Mary's Cathedral was a massive structure, with thick stone walls and iron doors, like a fortress. Its high windows made it difficult of access. A fairly strong wall surrounded the spacious courtyard, which was also a cemetery. The gates were made of iron bars.

When the Turks arrived at the main entrance, they found it securely closed. To break through was not an easy task. They went around the wall and found the weakest point and made a hole in it. They poured through by hundreds. The doors of the main auditorium were fastened and bolted from within. The windows were too high. They seemed at a loss for a moment. They milled around among the graves shouting, threatening, gesticulating, discharging their guns. A mollah went up the steps of the episcopate and with a loud voice proclaimed that all the lives within the church were a corban to God (a bloody offering to Allah), ending with the usual Mohammedan formula. Just then someone suggested an easy way of destroying the whole crowd of ensnared and defenseless humanity. A shout of triumph went up. No sooner said than done. It did not take them long to procure a quantity of petroleum, which they poured inside the windows and set it on fire. It is not to be imagined what happened in the holy sanctuary during the hours that followed. The kerosene spread along the floor carrying death and destruction with it. Soon the entire structure was in flames. The fire could not reach the high gallery; but the heavy smoke was enough to suffocate those who tried to find shelter there. At last someone opened the main door from the inside. A crowd rushed out. The Turks standing in front of it were shooting at them promiscuously. Those not burned to death inside were shot down and killed outside. Only about three hundred persons, at their last extremity found the way to the roof and remained there until the end, at all hazards of the collapsing of the building. These and a few others, miraculously escaped with their lives.

Is there anything parallel to this fiendish destruction of

life in the annals of history? Nero ordered the cold-blooded slaughter of the Christians, whom he blamed as the cause of the burning of Rome. Attila laid waste many countries and massacred wholesale, those who made no resistance. Genghiz Khan destroyed a dozen cities, inflicting death and torture upon thousands who dared to oppose him. But never has such a carnage been perpetrated anywhere as it was in the church in Ourfa. The heaped up bodies of the burned or slain men, women and children presented a frightful sight. It haunted one for weeks and months. The smoke continued for days. The walls were spattered with blood. Parts of human bodies stuck to the cement floor. The beautiful chancel with all its sacred vessels and rare relics was transformed into a mass of rubbish. One could do nothing but lament with the Psalmist: "They have cast fire into Thy sanctuary, O God, they have defiled the dwelling place of Thy name."

Many pathetic stories are related in this connection.

A young mother, with her two babies, had taken refuge in the gallery, after her husband was killed. As the flames began to spread on the floor of the church, a Turk, watching through the window, saw her and was struck with her comeliness. He wanted to save her and to possess her. As soon as the door was thrown open, he rushed in, mounted the stairs, and stood beside her. "Come quick. Save yourself and your babies."

"No, I will not come," she answered.

"But you will be burned to death here," he cautioned her.

"I would rather die than go with a Turk."

He tried to persuade her: "I will be a good husband to you. I will take care of your children. Have pity on them."

"Go away. Leave me alone."

Seeing that the time was short and words were of no avail, he took hold of her arm and forcibly dragged her away. The babies began to cry. She felt helpless. Suddenly she yielded.

"Wait," she said, "lead the way." She made as if she were going to take the babies up to follow him. The Turk was duped. As soon as his back was turned, she grasped her precious darlings to her breast, and in the twinkling of an eye, leaped over the railing, into the lake of raging flames below, calling upon Christ to receive her soul.

There was a rich Armenian, a member of the Civil Council of the Turkish government, a man of high standing with

the community. His name was Ohan Effendi Ounjian. He had taken a leading part in collecting the weapons from the people. When the massacre broke out for the second time, he was utterly stunned. He could not understand it at all. He had been promised by the governor himself that there would be no disturbance in the city, no clash between the Moslem and the Christian elements of the population. He prepared to go to the serai at once and remonstrate with the authorities. As he stepped out and turned towards the Turkish quarter, he saw a motley crowd of Mohammedans advancing, with swords waving and guns threatening. Immediately he turned back. His house was in the path of the oncoming rabble. He gathered all the members of his family, and from a back door, through the Armenian streets, arrived at the Cathedral. He found the place filled to excess. He was still there in the gallery when the church was set on fire.

A young man seeing him cringing in a corner said, "Ohan Effendi, it was you who caused us to be left defenseless, taking away from us the few arms that we had; you are responsible for this bloodshed."

"You are right, my son," he mourned in a pitiful voice. "I was deceived with the others. The governor promised protection and I believed him. They used me as an instrument to destroy my own people. Woe is me!"

"But you had been with the Turks so many years, you should have known better. Now, what are you going to do?"

"To die with my people. It is a just punishment for my colossal stupidity. But I did it with the best intentions. God help me!" He never tried to save himself. Like a good captain, he remained where he was and perished with the rest.

That same young man, whose name was Haroutun Ekmekjian, stood at the entrance, watching for a chance to escape. He saw a burly Turk, swinging a huge sword in his hand and challenging anybody to come out. Flying at him like a tiger, he twisted the sword from his hand, with breathless impetuosity, laid it on the man's bare and bald head, deep and true. He rushed at the next assailant and drove the sharp point into his heart. Swiftly he dashed at the thickly-packed mob and ran riot among them, killing some, wounding others, without a moment's rest, until a soldier in the crowd shot him to death.

At night when the Turks withdrew, those who had escaped to the roof of the church came down stealthily and disappeared in the dark.

Others also, who had hidden themselves in the balconies, or stood near the open windows, breathing fresh air, survived.

We must bear witness to the fact that some of the prominent Turks did not approve of this indiscriminate butchering of an innocent people. In defiance of the stringent orders to give no quarter to the Armenians, at least two of them opened their doors wide and received as many as they could into their protection. Especially one, Haji Kiamil Bey, saved hundreds of lives, among them the life of my younger brothers.

There were at this time two eminent clergymen in Ourfa. Archbishop Khoran Mukhitarian, a learned divine and the author of several books, and Reverend Hagop Abuhiattian, the Pastor of the Evangelical Church, a graduate of the university of Basel.

The Archbishop was residing in Saint Sarkis monastery, outside the ancient walls, about a mile west of the city. On the first day of the massacre, two zaptiahs presented themselves to him and giving the governor's regards asked him to remain where he was. They told him that the city was unsafe because of a small disturbance. When he tried to question them, they affected ignorance. "We know nothing about it. We have only come to protect you."

"But why should I need protection? And from whom?" he asked again.

"From any marauders who might try to molest you. And to make assurance doubly sure, we would kindly request you to stay in your room." So saying, they left quietly, closed the door behind them gently and locked it.

The Archbishop realized that he was a prisoner in his own house. The situation must be serious. What was happening in the city? He rang for his servant. One of the zaptiahs answered: "What can I do for you?" he asked.

"Send my servant to me."

"I am sorry, he cannot come. I will render whatever service you desire."

Evidently his attendant was in custody too.

"Very well, prepare my horse. I want to go to the serai and see the Mutasarif."

"No, Effendi. It is prohibited. The streets are not safe."

"You can come with me," the Prelate insisted.

"My orders forbid me to leave this place. No harm must reach you."

There were several families living in the monastery. Generally, they could be heard talking and moving about in the compound. Today, silence prevailed. No noise came to him as yet from the city, because of a hill which intervened.

The Archbishop's room was on the second floor and had windows that looked towards the east. It communicated on the north side with a walled roof which served him as a promenade. As he was walking about in this place, he sighted men running down the hill, coming from the city. When they approached, they told him that the whole Armenian quarter was overrun by a Turkish mob that was massacring and plundering without opposition. The gates of the monastery were all strongly fastened by the zaptiahs. The fugitives from the city could not get in. They suggested climbing over the walls and killing the Turks.

"No, you cannot do that," he said, forbidding them to act rashly. "You must hide yourselves in the vineyards around the place, until the storm passes over."

His Eminence was kept a prisoner, under lock and key, during the two days of the massacre. The officers brought him food and served him in every way they could. They were respectful in their own way. Evidently his life was being spared by a higher authority. It was surmised by some that as Archbishop Khoren had once been an acting patriarch in Constantinople and was well known in government circles and among the European Ambassadors, it would be unwise to destroy him with his people and in this way draw the attention of the foreign powers to the enormity of the carnage.

It was on the second day, Sunday morning, as he was praying, he heard a woman's voice in one of the rooms along the corridor. Listening more attentively, he recognized the crying of a woman in torture. He sprang from his knees and ran to the door. He tried to open it, but could not. He knocked on it loudly. There was no answer. He banged violently, again and again. Still silence! He called them by name, commanding them to open the door. The girl heard him and in a voice that was scarcely audible said, "Holy Father, help me; they are tormenting me. I cannot resist; they are assaulting me."

The old Prelate, tears in his eyes, thundered impreca-

tions against them and threatened them with dire punishment. He was ignored; they did not take any notice of him.

In desperation, uttering a deep groan, he went back to his chair and sat down. He was unable to help. They were butchering his flock, violating the women and he was powerless, impotent, tied hand and foot. Why should he live? Was his life more valuable than any of their lives? Would it not be better to die with his beloved people? The blood rushed into his head; his mind was unbalanced. He saw the pocket knife on the table, snatched it, bared his arm and severed an artery. The red fluid spurted forth in a stream. At sight of it, he smiled. It flowed copiously on his desk. It reddened the manuscript of a book he was writing. A faintness came over him; he dropped his head on his arm. Gradually he slipped off and fell heavily on the floor.

The noise of the falling roused the zaptiahs from their criminal indulgence. They opened the door and discovered that the Archbishop was lying on his back, in a pool of blood, his bleeding wrist on his face, the white patriarchal beard soaked in red. They were frightened. The order to them was to see that no harm would overtake the prisoner. They stopped the bleeding immediately by bandaging the arm and laid him on the sofa.

When Archbishop Khoren regained consciousness, he found himself surrounded by friends and under the care of a physician.

Pastor Abuhiattian was martyred with a group of the members of his congregation, who had gathered together in a house, the door of which was barricaded. The mob broke through it and put every one of them to the sword, except the women and the children, whom they led off to the nearest mosque as captives. Abuhiattian's body was afterwards put across a donkey's back, face downwards, arms and legs hanging, carried outside the city and thrown into a hole, as a special dishonor to his rank, as he was well known as a man of high education and saintliness.

There were twelve priests ministering to the spiritual needs of the congregation of the National Apostolic Church before the massacre. Only two survived. The religious heads were severally marked for sacrifice.

The prominent and influential men in the community

were sought after and brought forth from their hiding places under promise of protection and slaughtered.

The number of young men among the victims was comparatively small. Most of them were in prison, where they remained until after the storm. Many escaped by concealing themselves in subterranean vaults or running away to the mountains.

The houses that did not lose a member were exceptional. Some families were annihilated.

Later on we took the census of the people; we set down by name, in black and white, and found, besides many wounded, over twenty-three hundred casualties, most of whom burned to death in the cathedral.

What Euripides said about Troy was literally fulfilled in Ourfa:

“When a still city lieth in the hold
Of Desolation, all God’s spirit there
Is sick and turns from worship.”

At night the women were apportioned among the murderers. The young and the beautiful ones were taken to the harems and the elderly ones sent back to their homes.

The government commandeered the Jewish population of the city, to remove the bodies of the dead and to cleanse the streets.

There was not a store or a house left untouched; the act of plundering was complete. The Turks had not learned that “Riches are no bulwark to the man who in wantonness hath spurned from his sight the mighty altar of Righteousness.”

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

THE AFTERMATH OF THE MASSACRE

*O miracle of woman . . .
O noble heart who, being strait-besieged
By this wild king to force her to his wish,
Nor bent, nor broke, nor shunn'd a soldier's death.*

TENNYSON

A few weeks after the massacre, three Armenian girls were visiting each other in Hassan Bey's house. They had been captured and carried away by the Turks. One of them, Mariam, a mere girl of eighteen, was lamenting the death of her parents. She was telling how her father was killed, how her mother springing to his help was clubbed to death. "When I rushed on the heartless butchers asking them not to kill my mother, she told me to run away and hide myself. But where could I hide—the place was full of wild men. Before I took half a dozen steps, a Turk grabbed my arm and brought me to his house."

The other girl, a young woman of twenty, deplored her life of captivity. She said she was engaged to be married to a fine man. They arrested him for no reason whatsoever. During the massacre she had taken refuge in a neighbor's house, where many had gathered. After killing all the men, the murderers had led the women to the mosque, where, later, one man had chosen her as his prize.

The third woman was the wife of the late Vartan Emerzian, a man of wealth and influence and a member of the Civic Council of the city. Lucia, a highly educated woman, after listening to the distressing stories of her two companions said: "Girls, do you know that death is preferable to a life of shame? We have many instances in our glorious history, when our honorable ancestors endured torture and death sooner than submit to their captors. I remember when I was in college I learned by heart, parts of a tragic drama, written by Euripides, one of the ancient Greek poets, on the occasion of the destruction of Troy. It applies to our condition—

To die is only not to be;
And better to be dead than grievously
Living. They have no pain, they ponder not
Their own wrong. But the living that is brought
From joy to heaviness, his soul doth roam,
As in a desert, lost from its old home.

Lucia Emerzian was a handsome woman, twenty-six years of age, used to a life of luxury and comfort. She had a happy home, loved dearly her husband and only child, a boy of four.

All the three girls were silent for a few moments. They were thinking of what Euripides had said. They remembered their former homes, the dear ones all passed away. How happy and free they used to be. Their eyes filled with tears.

Lucia spoke again, more soliloquizing than addressing her companions. "My troubles began on the day that my husband invited his fellow members to a banquet in our house. Hassan Bey was one of them. I was superintending the waiters in serving the dinner. I noticed that he stared at me continually. It was embarrassing; but I did not attach importance to it.

"After that he called again, pretending that he had business to transact with my husband. I surmised his real motive. His roaming eyes betrayed his purpose. He looked for a chance to see me, but I did not appear. This must have inflamed his passion more than ever.

"I told my husband. He laughed and made light of it. He assured me that I was mistaken. Hassan Bey was not that sort of man.

"During the carnage he sent his men to invite us to his house for protection. My husband suspected treachery and refused to go. At this one of them stabbed him. He fell in a pool of blood. Before he breathed his last, they caught me with my baby boy, and dragged us out of the house. He cast at me a piteous glance and with a heart-rending groan, gave up the ghost. Since that hour his beloved face has never left me. When I am alone in the dark, I see him beckoning me to come to him. As the time goes on, my bitterness and anger, instead of being assuaged, are getting keener and more deadly against the despicable betrayer.

"The first night Hassan Bey tried to win me by words of condolence; hypocritically expressing sorrow for the death of his friend, as if I did not know who were the real perpetrators of the crime. My flesh shrank at his touch. He did not even give me time to calm myself. He was crazy with lust. His stored up passion found vent on the first occasion. I was helpless; I was his slave. O, the loathsomeness of it! The inhuman torture! I put up a deathly struggle, but he was strong;

he subdued me. I despise him with an unquenchable abhorrence."

She spoke to herself, once more from the same author, addressing the dead—

"O, my best beloved,

That, being mine, wast all in all to me . . .

No man's touch had ever come

Near me, when thou from out my father's home

Didst lead me and make me thine . . . And thou art dead."

Araxy said, "Sister Lucia, you must be patient. God has given you a darling child. You will take care of him and be strengthened and comforted in his companionship. Bring him up as an Armenian and a Christian. He will grow up and take his father's place and release you from this house of bondage."

These words stirred Lucia Emerzian to the depth of her heart. Tears started to flow. She held the child and pressed him hard on her breast, with a strange premonition that a more disastrous calamity was hanging over her head.

Hagopik was a lovely boy, with curly hair, dimpled cheeks and a prattling tongue. He never left his mother's side. He slept in the same room. He cried bitterly in the dark, when she was disturbed and tormented by the man, her master. Hassan Bey told her to keep him apart, to make him sleep in another room. She would not listen to him; she could not trust him away from her sight. The child was a thorn in his flesh; he annoyed him continually. The whole of Lucia's love was centered in the boy; the only way to turn her feelings towards himself was to remove the object of affection. That is how the Turk reasoned.

He set his negro slave, the eunuch of the harem, to watch for a chance. He instructed him carefully. Hassan Bey's palace was a large building, divided into two parts, one for men and one for women. Lucia lived in a room on the second floor, on the north side of the courtyard, separated from the other female inmates. The negro's constant attendance about her was explained that, as she had so entirely supplanted the wives, it would not be safe to be left alone. Who knows what mischief they might hatch.

One day she went down stairs, leaving the boy alone in the room. When she returned the boy was not there. She looked everywhere. She could not find him. She called him; there was no answer. "O, God, where is my child?" She rushed

out to ask the negro. He was nowhere to be seen. She went to the other women: "Have pity on me; where is Hagopik?" They would not, or could not tell. She went to the men's part of the house. Hassan Bey's young son, Noori, met her.

"Have you seen my son, Noori Effendi?"

"No, what happened?"

"They have stolen my boy."

"Who has stolen your boy? And why?"

"Look for him, Noori Effendi, please."

He went to his father's office and told him that the Armenian boy had disappeared and no one knew where he had gone. Hassan Bey frowned at his son and told him not to bother his head about such things. "Go to your books." He was studying to be a lawyer.

Meanwhile Lucia entered. "My son, my son; they have kidnapped him." she cried with dry eyes.

"Calm yourself, Lucia. You need not shout at me like that. Who has kidnapped your son?"

She winced as if a blow had been struck. She felt a gripping of the heart. It suddenly flashed upon her mind. "Here is my child's murderer," she thought Without another word, she turned and ran away.

In the courtyard she saw the eunuch just coming out of an underground room. She ran to him: "Please Abdo, where is Hagopik?" He was shaking all over. He was not looking at her. He was looking over her head towards the entrance of the Harem. She turned and just caught Hassan Bey making a sign. The negro led the way to the cellar. She found her child's strangled body with a violin string around his neck.

She took the body up and carried it to her room and put it down on the bed. She untied the cord, removed the shoes and smoothed down the clothes. "They have killed my child," she muttered. "The wolves! He is gone to join his father. My darling boy. My heart's desire. My only stay in life. Why should I live any longer?"

Suddenly the flood gates opened and tears rained down her cheeks. "O, my son, my son; I would that I were dead in your place. It is bitter to lose you after your father. I was able to bear my lot as long as you lived. Now that you are gone, there is no reason why I should continue to live. Could a man's heart be so callous and insensible as to kill an innocent baby? The crowning cruelty of it! Helpless little child!

You must have struggled hard. Look how savagely they have pulled your hair—those sweet-scented curls, which I used to kiss fondly. Your lips are silent and blue; how red they were, like a rosebud, prattling sweet nothings, grandest music to your mother's ears! Ah, those laughing eyes, your father's eyes, forever closed, closing with them my light, my sun. Limp are the tender arms, that would encircle my neck and kiss me with wet mouth. No more will I hear the pattering feet; jumping in my bed and curling his soft warm body to my breast. O, God, endure it! I cannot. Hagopik, awake; speak to me; smile!"

She fell prone on the bed, swooning. For a long time she remained in that position. When she gained consciousness and once more realized what had taken place, she stood erect, raising her hands to heaven, she swore eternal vengeance: "I shall live! I shall find a way to revenge this colossal, inexplicable atrocity."

After covering the body with a sheet, she went out to look for Hassan Bey. She found him in the harem with the women, chattering and laughing. At her appearance they ceased talking. She said quite calmly: Hassan Bey, I have come to beg a boon. May I have the body of my slaughtered baby buried in the Armenian cemetery, by a priest, with Christian funeral rite?"

"Why trouble so much about a dead child," he answered. "I will see that it is interred properly. It shall not be cast into one of the holes, where many other corpses are piled up. A separate grave shall be dug for your son in our burial ground to lie in by himself."

"No, please. Grant me this request. This is the only favor that I have ever made bold to ask of you."

Hassan Bey thought the time had come to give her a piece of salutary advice. "Lucia, you know that you have almost exhausted my patience. . . How long are you going to cling so fiercely to your old prejudices? If you were wiser you would let bygones be bygones. I know it is painful. Endure it like a brave woman and adapt yourself to your new surroundings. You have not strength enough to resist. Look around you; can you see any help coming from any quarter? Your people are all killed; the Armenian nation is non-existent; your husband is dead; you are a lone woman and a prisoner. Can you battle against destiny? This is your kismet. For

your own good I would admonish you to refrain from creating ill-blood."

All this time, Lucia standing there, in front of the snickering women, who reclined in various voluptuous positions, on dais and divan, was trying to control her quivering body. Her lips moved, but no word came from them.

Hassan Bey saw and his anger was kindled. "Now you are cursing; are you not? Utter one single word against me or mine, your baby shall have no burial. It shall be tossed naked outside the city, for dogs and birds of prey to devour it."

Eyes brimming with tears, she entreated him. "I will do whatever you tell me. I will obey your every command. Only let me have a Christian burial for my child."

While the Turkish women experienced a diabolical pleasure at her sufferings, the man relented. "Very well, you can have your wish. Only you cannot be present at the funeral service. You must not go to the church yard. I will not allow that."

"No, I will not. Permit me to write a note to one of the priests and ask him to come and take the body away and bury it decently, in accordance with our ancient usage."

"That is not necessary. A priest enter my house! Never! I will tell Abdo to make a box, in which you can put the body and he will carry it to the church."

"May I write a note to the priest and explain what to do?"

"You may do so. But be careful what you write. Do not say anything treasonable in your note. I will have it translated before sending."

In due time the body was removed and properly buried in the churchyard.

For a while Lucia controlled her feelings and made herself agreeable to the man, against whom she had sworn implacable revenge. He thought she had been tamed.

Lucia Emerzian was an attractive woman—young, handsome and healthy. She had a pair of beautiful black eyes, shaded by arching dark brows. Her tall and slender body, full and rounded, had the quality of alluring the masculine sex. She was the kind of woman that men turned twice to look at. Her captor was very fond of her; in fact, he was in love with her, if such a term could be applicable to a Turk with many wives. He spent most of his time at home in her company. He

did not allow her to be seen by other men. He was jealous even of his own son of twenty-two, who had a great liking for the Armenian lady, as he called her.

In his father's absence, he would seek her out and converse with her. She encouraged him. He was attracted not only by her good looks, but also by her intelligence and learning. He was a broad-minded young man. He questioned her about her college life, about the subjects she had studied, and about the number of languages she could speak.

"But Noori Effendi," she told him one day, "you should not come to see me so frequently . . . Your father does not like it."

"I am doing no harm. Besides I like you."

Another day he tried to embrace her. She resisted. But all the same he kissed her. She conceived a plan. A desperate scheme.

She would dress temptingly and meet him. Their friendship thickened. They were less careful. Hassan Bey noticed it. Spoke to his son to keep away from Lucia. Warned her against Noori. At the same time, he did not take it seriously but considered it a temporary boyish infatuation.

Friday is the Moslem Sunday; they are not supposed to work on that day. After the midday prayers in the mosque, father and son came home together. The former went out with some friends for a horseback ride. Noori stayed in the house. He was hanging around to get a chance to go to Lucia. She watched him from her room. After a while she took a towel and went down stairs to the hammam, with which many of the rich Turkish residences are provided. She did not lock the door; left it a little ajar. Noori saw her and cautiously followed. Went in and closed the door. She told him to go away; they might be detected. He tried to kiss her. She pushed him away. With inflamed passion, he grabbed her, putting his arms around her body, kissed her lips, shoulders, breasts. She pretended to resist, to struggle. At last they heard footsteps. The door opened and a woman, the rival of Noori's mother, stood on the threshold. He stopped immediately and rushed out, pushing the woman to one side, nearly knocking her down.

They were betrayed. The woman told Hassan Bey about the affair. He was furious. He thundered against his son. He threatened him. The young man did not deny anything. He went so far as to state that she was not his wife, why should

he be concerned about it? "Besides," he said, "I love her." This was the limit. The elder man took down his horse whip and gave his son a sound thrashing. The boy did not move. He received his punishment with fortitude. Only his white face and flashing eyes showed his bitter resentment against his father.

Hassan Bey marched to Lucia's room, whip in hand, still chafing with indignation. She had listened to his wrathful words and heard the sound of the whipping. Was it her turn now? She would not be beaten by this man. She stood in the middle of the chamber, waiting for him. One look, however, at her challenging attitude and proud, fearless demeanor, was enough to bring him back to his senses. He lowered his arm and asked: "What is this I hear about Noori and yourself?"

"What can I do?" she complained. "He follows me everywhere."

"Why do you not kick him out?"

"It does not make any difference."

"I warn you to be careful; that is all."

He left the room, growling to himself. "I will stop him, the scamp." He felt like killing him, when he realized that the wretch had dared to embrace her. He wondered what share Lucia had had in this affair.

Lucia, however, did not relinquish her purpose. She not only did not desist from being friendly with him, but also used every feminine device, to allure the inexperienced youth and to tempt him to acts of indiscretion.

Four months had gone by since the great massacre. It was spring. Hassan Bey's large family arranged to go to a picnic in one of the gardens surrounding the city. Lucia was invited to join them, but she said she would rather stay at home. She was still in mourning for the death of her son. All the servants went with the women to take care of them. So Lucia was left alone in the house.

Noori knew this. He told his father that he would like to go to the garden and eat supper there with the family. He came straight to the house, opened the door quietly and went in. This time, he had resolved, to satisfy his craving.

Lucia heard him and surmised why he had come. She began to undress, pretending that she was changing her garments. When he appeared at the entrance of the room, she

asked him to wait outside. He, however, leaped at her savagely. She pushed him away. A struggle ensued.

Meanwhile Hassan Bey, suspecting Noori's intentions, had followed him. As he opened the front door, Lucia heard and guessed who it was. She raised such a piercing cry for help that the elder man ran upstairs, taking two and three steps at a time. He found his son in her bedroom.

Hassan Bey had been in the habit of carrying a poniard on his person, since the massacre, in self protection against any attack by a vengeful and desperate Armenian. He drew it and rushed at his son, who at the sight of his father had risen to face him. Without a moment's hesitation Hassan Bey plunged the knife into his heart. The young man fell to the floor, gasping for breath. The father stood watching his dying boy. He was dazed, rendered insensible.

Lucia came forward and picked up the dagger. It was red with the young blood of her enemy's son. She examined it, and felt its sharp point with her fingers.

Suddenly she burst out into a fit of laughter, with such a triumphant note that it jarred upon the feelings of the man. He turned around to see the reason for such exultation. He saw her raise the knife high in the air and heard as from a far distance—"Thank God, I am requited. Rest in your grave, my beloved husband. I join you soon. Hassan Bey, I am paid in kind—a son for a son. Goodbye."

Before he could take a step, she buried the cold steel in her tender flesh and with a blood curdling scream, fell across the dead body of the young man.



CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

PREPARATION FOR DEFENSE

*But what more oft, in nations grown corrupt,
And by their vices brought to servitude,
Than to love bondage more than liberty —
Bondage with ease, than strenuous liberty —
And to despise, or envy, or suspect,
Whom God hath of His special favour raised
As their deliverer? If he aught begin,
How frequent to desert him, and at last
To heap ingratitude on worthiest deeds.*

MILTON

The survivors of the massacre of Ourfa, with characteristic promptitude immediately started the work of reconstruction. Before long the fallen walls were raised, the broken doors and windows repaired, the dirt and debris from the streets removed; the whole ruined section of the city had a prosperous and flourishing appearance once more. It is a national trait—build, build, build.

The plundered household goods were replaced by new furniture. Some had found time to hide in underground cellars such valuable articles as Persian carpets, silverware, clocks, etc., which they brought out and restored to their proper places. The houses looked as habitable and attractive as they had been previously.

Many women had buried their jewels and ornaments in secret places. They were unearthed and given to the men, who turned them into money, to use as capital to begin again the business that had been interrupted so violently. Once more the commercial enterprise of the city passed into the hands of the Armenians. The wealth which had been lost through pillage and plunder, flowed back, as if by magic, into their coffers. Apparently the past was forgotten. Looking superficially at the life and activity prevailing in those days, one would not think that acts of a disastrous and bloody nature had been committed only yesterday. Some went so far as to fraternize with the enemy.

Ecclesiastical affairs were revived. New councillors were elected to replace those who had been martyred. The Archbishop ordained additional priests to administer to the spiritual needs of the people. St. Mary's Cathedral was cleansed and repainted, but it could not be used for services for the time being as it was unsafe.

Miss Shattuck invited one of the missionaries from the neighboring city of Aintab to come out and commence the evangelical services which had not been held for several weeks. After a while she asked me to supply the pulpit and carry on the pastoral work. The church was always packed with eager worshipers. On the first Sunday, it was like a funeral service. Every one had lost dear brothers, husbands, fathers. They needed comforting. The words of the Saviour encouraged them to bear their sorrow. "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you."

The Turks were watching us with wondering eyes. Our rehabilitation so soon, was bewildering; they could not understand it. They thought they had done with us once for all. Such a crushing blow should stagger any people. But behold these Armenians rising from the ashes, like the fictitious Phoenix of mythology, to a new life and vigor.

When the news of the terrible slaughter of the Armenians of Ourfa reached the Central Bureau of the Revolutionary Federation, it was decided to send workers to educate the people for self-defense. Dikran Aryan and Arusag Ananian volunteered to go. They traveled separately, the latter accompanied by her mother and brother, and in due time arrived in Ourfa.

They found fertile soil there for revolutionary activities. The young people who had survived, gathered around them eagerly, both men and women and listened to their words. The number increased when those who were in prison gradually obtained their freedom. Especially the more youthful among them, who had witnessed the butchery of their elders and the ill-treatment of their mothers and sisters, boiling over with a feeling of vengeance, threw themselves heart and soul into this new movement. There were scores of young women who had managed to escape from Turkish harems, filled with bitterness against their abductors and who had tales to tell of violence and brutality. Some of them appeared in a pitiful condition. Sores on their hands and faces proclaimed the struggle they had gone through to defend themselves. One girl had actually a piece bitten off of her breast. As a nurse, Arusag did what she could to help them. She praised them for their willingness to suffer rather than submit to the brutal enemy.

A secret society was formed which all the young people were invited to join. They met at first in private houses, but soon had to seek larger accomodation. They moved to the public lecture hall, within the enclosure of St. Mary's Cathedral and held meetings there almost every night. Aryan informed them of the great revolutionary party and how through its leadership some communities had been able to resist the enemy. He talked to them of the French Revolution; of the war of Independence of the American colonies, of great struggles for freedom and elementary human rights. He urged them to arm themselves. "Buy as many firearms as you can. Do this covertly and casually. Be careful not to raise suspicion. Refrain from being aggressive. Bide your time."

The fame of Dikran Aryan and Arusag Ananian spread among the young manhood and womanhood of Ourfa. They all knew that they were engaged to be married. Aryan was automatically the leader of the Party. His European education, knowledge of the science of warfare and his experience in revolutionary activity, eminently fitted him for this position. The work of the preparation for self-defense was carried on secretly among all classes of society. Captains and lieutenants were appointed and every member was sworn to secrecy and obedience.

There was one man in the group, whom Aryan singled out as an exceptionally capable person and a born leader. This was Muggerdich Yotnaghberian, already famous as a fearless fighter and a daring strategist, a source of pride to his friends and a cause of terror to his enemies. He was not an educated man. He had not been outside of Turkey, and had no military training beyond having served as a private soldier in the Turkish army. A friendship was formed between Dikran and Muggerdich, which lasted until the end.

The entire Armenian quarter buzzed with animation. As if the people had awakened from a long sleep and were just realizing their precarious situation. They were blinded by the false promises of the government and had surrendered their weapons with grievous result. To trust the word of the Turk . . . ? Never again! They had learned their lesson, and had paid dearly for it. Through bitter experience, they had come to the realization that "God helps those who help themselves."

Old and young, conservative and liberal, pacifist and radical; all came to the conclusion that they must be their own

defenders. There was no other way for safety. They determined to rely on their own resources. Self-defense was the watchword of the day. Aryan urged every able bodied man and woman to prepare for future eventualities, to consider fire arms as essential as one's daily bread.

Consequently the people began to arm themselves secretly. The business of buying and selling guns and pistols was carried on stealthily. Revolvers were imported from Aleppo, hidden in merchandise and sold. It was not uncommon to buy a rifle from a Kurd or a Turk, if a little more than its value was paid. Even ex-soldiers willingly parted with their rifles if they could get a good price for them. After a while scarcely a house could be found without some kind of a weapon.

Muggerdich Yotnaghberian showed great ingenuity in procuring fire arms. He knew the Arabic language well and would travel among the nomadic tribes, as a peddler, loaded with small wares and exchange these for muskets and pistols. Sometimes he would don his military uniform and mix with the soldiers and appropriate their rifles by foul means or fair. When he dressed himself as a private, he could not be recognized as an Armenian. He would be transferred with the regiment to other cities and steal away at the right time with as many guns as he could carry.

Once, while he was in Aleppo, he heard that a Turkish officer, a captain, had a quantity of arms and ammunition in his possession, and was selling them privately. It was after the Balkan wars. He had, no doubt, stolen them and was trying to convert them into cash. Here was a chance for Muggerdich to enrich himself with modern rifles. But how? He could not go to him as an Armenian purchaser. That was out of the question. He set his wits to work and hit upon a scheme. Disguised as a native Jewish middleman, taking with him a companion, dressed like a Circassian, he went to the residence of the captain. In broken Turkish, imitating an Aleppo Jew, he introduced himself as an intermediary, and his Circassian friend as a customer and offered to buy the rifles that the captain had for sale.

The officer received them politely, but denied the possession of such articles. Muggerdich smiled ingratiatingly and explained that he had heard of the commodity from one of his secret agents, whose name it was not necessary to divulge. To further dissipate his suspicion, he elaborated a story that

there was trouble in the Caucasus, between the Circassians and the Russian authorities. Anticipating a clash, the Nationalist Party had delegated Abmedoff Effendi, here, to procure firearms. It sounded plausible. These men did not look like detectives. The captain softened. His doubts were dissipated. He revealed that he had twenty-six Mauser rifles, with a round of a hundred cartridges for each.

"How much do you want for them?" asked Muggerdich, whose assumed name was Mosheh Razook.

"Ten pounds for each rifle, including the cartridges," replied the captain.

"What kind of pounds? There are three kinds used in Aleppo; French, Turkish and English, with a difference in value."

"Let us say Turkish," compromised the officer.

Muggerdich rubbed his chin. "Ten Turkish pounds? It is too much. However, let us see the guns."

"They are not here. They are somewhere else. When we agree and you pay the money, I will deliver them to you."

"But we cannot buy until we see the goods. It would be bad business."

It was plain that the thief did not desire to disclose the place where the stolen arms were concealed.

Still hesitating, he said, "I can show you samples."

Muggerdich agreed.

The Turk sent his orderly to bring a gun. After a while he returned with it and a few cartridges. The Armenians noticed that the man did not leave the house. They were sitting in such a position that they could see the street door. The rifle was not new, but it was in good condition.

Muggerdich began to bargain. He said they could not pay ten pounds for these old guns. He offered five pounds for them. Arguing up and down, in oriental fashion, at last an agreement was reached to let them go for seven pounds each, including the ammunition, with a ten per cent commission for the intermediary, to be paid by the captain.

The time had come for Muggerdich to act. Suddenly he drew a revolver from his pocket and pointed it at the heart of the officer. His companion did the same to the orderly. Muggerdich commanded them to put up their hands. He searched them and found no weapons on their persons. Bringing forth two pieces of strong cord, he tied their arms and

legs on the chairs and gagged their mouths tightly with handkerchiefs. He took the bunch of keys from the servant's pocket and investigated the house, while the other fellow kept watch over them. He found the arms in a back room. He wrapped them in blankets into several parcels and went out. A covered wagon was waiting at the corner of the street. He signed it to approach. The parcels were safely transferred to it and driven away. After disposing of them in their proper places, Muggerdich returned to the house. Without entering it, he whistled to his companion, who came out and they departed together.

The captain and his orderly were found by visitors still tied and gagged. They would not reveal what was stolen from the house.

Another time Muggerdich appropriated a large quantity of arms and ammunition from the Turkish armory. This was situated in the old citadel of Aleppo. As a Turkish soldier he had free access to the place. He investigated every corner and crevice, to find a way out without going through the main entrance. He lighted upon a large accumulation of stones, that looked as if they were hiding something. His curiosity was aroused. Peering around to see that no one was in sight, he began removing the blocks. As he labored, a snake crawled out hissing. He crushed its head under his heel. Soon his conjecture was verified. He saw the corner of a rusty flat iron, that looked like a trap door. In a transport of delight, he returned the pile of stones back in place and retired.

In the night, equipping himself with necessary tools and a candle, he repaired to where the discovery was made. He quickly removed the stones and exposed a heavy iron door, about two and a half feet square. Using the crowbar as a lever, he opened it. Gazing down in the dark, his eyes caught sight of steps indistinctly. He felt them with his feet. They were firm. He went down. The air was heavy underneath; but the opening above made it easy to breathe. He lit the candle. There was a passage downwards. He went down the stairs carefully. When he came to the bottom, he saw that the passage narrowed, going towards the east. He followed it and presently found himself outside the walls in an old ruined tower, built in the middle of a dry moat surrounding the fortress. He was joyous. He had found what he was looking for. He returned

the way he had come, covered the hole, smoothed down the marks of disturbance as much as possible and disappeared.

On the following day he told his comrades of the discovery. He laid before them a plan of action. At midnight, seven men gathered at the appointed place, outside of the citadel, bringing with them a wagon. Presently they saw a light in the tower. Muggerdich made his way through the secret passage. The others joined him. He stationed two men in the tower, two at the entrance in the citadel and took two with him to the armory. He told one man to stay with the carriage to guard it.

With the two small saws that he had brought, they cut the iron bars of the window and Muggerdich crawled through into the magazine. It was filled with guns and ammunition. He handed them over to his companions outside, half a dozen at a time. They carried them to the others waiting at the mouth of the passage, and so through to the vehicle. When he thought enough rifles and cartridges had been removed, he came out and together they left the place. When they arrived at their headquarters, they counted and found that there were one hundred and three rifles and plenty of ammunition.

A few days later the theft was discovered, but the Armenians were not suspected.

To what extent the resolution of self-defense had taken hold of the people who survived the last massacre, the following episode will show.

A prominent member of the community, who was well known for his pacific attitude, severely reproved a group of young men, for the demonstration of their militant spirit. They were indignant and went to the revolutionary headquarters and complained to the leaders.

It was decided to send a delegation to him and find out what would be his standing, in case of another uprising on the part of the Turks.

When an appointment was made, three men presented themselves to him, in his own house, on behalf of the Executive Committee, and demanded that he state his sentiments about this vital question and what course of action he would take in an emergency. Before he answered, they went on reminding him of the disastrous consequences of non-resistance during the last massacre, criticized him for his pacific ideas, lectured him on the duty of patriotism, on the love of home

and hearth and on the necessity of arming for self-protection.

Paron Soghomon (this was his name) smiled at this last statement, because all three were unmarried young men, while he himself was a middle aged man, with a wife and half a dozen children and the possessor of a happy home.

After listening patiently to their magniloquent speeches, he asked them if they had finished. When they answered "Yes," he rose from his place without uttering a word, went to a secret drawer and opened it. Then he invited his visitors to come and see its contents. The young fellows were struck with wonder. The receptacle was filled with all kinds of fire arms—guns and revolvers of various make, with their cartridges laid side by side in an orderly manner. Addressing them and pointing to the weapons, he said, "This is my answer to your question."

The men stood speechless. They were not prepared for this. It was beyond their expectation. "Go and tell the Committee. We are not going to entreat the Turk to spare us. We are not going to kneel before him and beseech him to spare our lives. We are going to speak with him with bullets this time. But," he pronounced his words with emphasis, "silence is golden. Foolish display, ostentatious exhibitions have no place in our scheme. Yes, prepare yourselves; get ready for the coming encounter. Because I see from reading the English papers that come to the Mission House, (he was the superintendent of the American Institutions of Industry) that the horizon has not yet been cleared. Be brave! But control your tongues and your feelings. Secret preparedness should be the order of the day."

But, alas! Paron Soghomon did not live to take part in the heroic resistance of his compatriots. He was betrayed by his bosom friend, a German Missionary, during the World War, arrested with two hundred other prominent Armenians, taken outside the city to a place called Shaytan Deresy (Valley of Satan) and slaughtered in cold blood.

In spite of all the evidence of the relentless determination of the Turkish government to annihilate the nation, there were Armenians, who still advocated a policy of submission and obedience, convinced that this would placate the authorities and establish harmony and peace between the Moslems and Christians. I was passing through the business section one day. I heard my name called. When I turned around I saw

a group of men in a store, talking. They signed to me to join them.

"What is it?" I asked. "What is the subject under discussion?"

"The usual topic," they answered.

"Pastor," said one of them, "we want to know what you think about preparation for self-defense. What should be our course of action in the face of the hostile attitude of the government? You remember that before the last massacre, our leaders adopted the tactics of flattery and adulation and we saw the baneful consequences. What do you say?"

What could I say? Self-preservation is the instinct of every living creature. It is the duty of every man to protect his life and the lives of those who are dependent upon him. But would it be wise to talk about it in a public place, to a number of men whose hearts were boiling over with bitterness and exasperation? Not that I did not trust them. Yet, I felt that I should be held responsible for every word I uttered. I replied with a quotation: "Self-defense is a virtue, sole bulwark of all right," says Byron.

Here is a man, they pointed out, who belongs to the old school; he still believes in the policy of non-resistance.

Avedis Basmajian, who was not alone in this belief, stated his reasons. "Our enemy is too strong. They number ten times as many. Add upon the hordes of Turks, Kurds and Arabs, the trained soldiers, well equipped with modern fire arms. What chance have we against such a formidable enemy to succeed in keeping them at bay? They will wipe us out in no time. The first attempt was only a trial, an experiment. They are experts now. My friends, I tell you that annihilation confronts us, unless we can find some way of safety for our existence, other than fighting."

This argument seemed irrefutable. To fight successfully and win lasting victory appeared impossible.

"Then what shall we do? Fold our arms and wait quietly for them to come and cut our throats?" asked some one.

"Even the dumb animals instinctively defend themselves when they see danger approaching," insisted another, "especially where the life of their young ones is concerned, they carry on a mortal combat against the enemy."

"The fallacy of Basmajian's argument lies in the fact that the trouble has nothing to do with our agreeing or dis-

agreeing with the local government," stated Oskerchian, a teacher, who had been following the politics of the day. "The order comes from above. The governor has no voice in the matter one way or another. It is for him to obey. Neither can we do anything about it. Our former leaders made the great mistake in thinking that submission and obedience would save their necks. We are just in the same situation as we were before the massacre. What are we going to do? Fall into the same mistake? I say, no! The experience should have taught us a lesson."

A young man whose father was killed, while he had hidden himself in a cellar, now vengeful and vindictive, wished that the Turks would rise again. "I heartily desire that they attack us once more. This time I will not hide, but stand face to face and fight. I am waiting for a chance to revenge the death of my father. If I fall, I will fall, gun in hand and consider my life well spent."

The man who had called me first to join the company said that the pastor had not yet expressed a definite opinion about the question. "Let us hear him." Looking around to see that no suspicious person was eavesdropping, I answered, "Oskerchian is quite right, my friends. We can do nothing to stop a rising. But we can be careful not to give any occasion for it. Avoid any kind of demonstration. Act circumspectly. Speak less. Always watchful, always ready. At the first warning of danger, stand before your hearth and home and defend your dear ones. I can understand martyrdom for a good cause. But no law of man or God forbids resistance against the inexcusable attack of a vicious enemy. Some of you say you have no weapons? The sheep have horns; the hens have beaks; you have finger nails."

There were two notorious Turks in Ourfa, who continually harassed the Christian population. They were the chiefs of two rival clans. They would go to the Armenian shops and buy goods on credit and never pay. To demand the money would result in a beating. No good-looking youth could cross their path without being molested. During the massacre they were the two most appalling slaughterers. With their gangs, they ran amuck in the crowd of helpless and defenseless men, women, and children. They boasted of the amount of blood they poured out. In the coffee houses, they compared the num-

bers of their victims. Their harems were filled with captured Armenian girls.

Muggerdich Yotnaghberian often visited these coffee houses, disguised as an Arab, to watch, to listen, and to gather information. He heard these two men talking, gloating over the depredations they had committed. He felt like leaping for their throats. But he controlled his temper and waited for his opportunity. He followed them, discovered where they lived, what places they frequented, and how they spent their time. Sometimes he looked like a Turk, at other times like a Kurd. His accent corresponded to the different characters he assumed. He was a wonderful imitator.

He saw them one day in a coffee house playing backgammon together. On a trifling point a dispute arose between them. Insulting words passed from one to the other. The breach widened. They began to quarrel. One of them dealt a blow at his antagonist. They charged at each other, with drawn daggers. Blood would have been spilled, had not those present intervened. They were separated and as it was closing time, they were sent home. Before they parted, however, the man who had received the blow hurled defiance at the aggressor and promised to square with him.

Muggerdich thought his chance had come to do something. Wrapping his Arab cloak around him and covering his face with the flowing head gear, he followed the man who had been threatened. Walking quickly, he passed him in the dark, without being seen and hurried to his residence. He concealed himself in the corner of the doorway. The man arrived, slouching along. . . As he was fumbling with his key to open the door, Muggerdich plunged his dagger into the side of the monster who boasted of wading knee deep in human blood. He fell in a heap—dead.

In the morning his corpse was found in congealed blood. A great hue and cry was raised. His friends and relatives gathered. The loud voice of lamentation resounded in the entire neighborhood. The Turkish population was stirred to its depth. "Who has done it?" "Who is the murderer?" Why, of course, who else? His rival, no doubt. Did they not quarrel last night in the coffee house? Did he not threaten him in parting?

The murdered man had a large following. They armed themselves and without warning descended upon the quarter

where the rival clan lived. A fierce battle ensued and many were killed on both sides, among them the other chief. The government heard and dispatched soldiers to restore peace. But it was already too late. The mischief was done. The street where the battle was fought, looked like a shambles. It reminded one of the last massacre in a small degree.

Muggerdich's scheme had succeeded; his purpose was accomplished. Two of the most blood thirsty foes of the Armenians were destroyed by each other's hands and some of their many victims avenged.

In the course of time the Revolutionary Party got a strong footing in the community. Dikran Aryan and Muggerdich Yotnaghberian worked together in perfect harmony. They educated the young people and trained them in the art of warfare. One thing, however, was lacking. They had no safe place for target practice. The back yards of the houses could not be used in a large measure; the noise of shooting would draw attention. The matter of finding a place outside the city was discussed. Muggerdich suggested the Dripping Cave, up in the mountains, which is also called "The Bloody Cave."

"It is well protected," he said. "It has the position of a natural fort. We can have our meetings there without fear of being molested."

"Where is this cave and how far is it from the city?" asked Dikran.

"About two miles, towards the west, in the uplands," he was answered.

"I should like to see it and investigate its possibilities."

"I will take you," said Khacher Bedoyan. "I know every foot of ground in those mountains. They provide pasture for my flocks every spring."

Several others volunteered to join the party.

On the following day, very early, Dikran, Muggerdich, Khacher, Kerekin and two scouts, met outside the old walls of the city. It was still dark. They followed the footpath, going to the west, through a small valley, passed St. Sarkis convent on the right, began climbing the narrow mountain trails, between jagged rocks. There were caves on all sides, from which building stones had been quarried since time immemorial. Some of these showed signs of habitation in the past. Others were used as tombs, in accordance with the customs of the times. Most of them had a narrow entrance, with a

large inner chamber. They bore the traces of centuries. The walls, in some cases, showed the marks of ornaments carved in bas-relief, and inscriptions in cuneiform characters, badly damaged. Aryan was very much interested. He desired to enter every cave and examine the writings. "If they could be read and understood," he said, "what tragic stories they would be able to tell us. They are the mute witnesses of centuries of oppression, persecution and pillage. Humanity has not yet learned to live peaceably and with good-will among the nations. Man is the same savage animal that he was ages ago."

When they arrived at the Dripping Cave, Dikran was amazed and held his breath. The mysterious obscurity of the excavation impressed him with a weird sensation. It was not possible to see a few steps beyond the entrance, which was about twenty-five feet wide and twenty feet high. One would hesitate the first time to break into the darkness. The sound of voices echoed from the unknown depths and increased the mysteriousness.

"We should have brought lights," said Dikran, turning to his companions. "It is utterly dark inside."

"We do not need lights," they answered, "As we go further in, we shall see better. The glare of the sun has dazzled our eyes; we shall get used to the darkness."

They did. When they advanced a little, they could see better.

About ten steps further, the cave widened. It had the appearance of a big hall. In the center there was a round basin, hewed from the living rock, with a depth of two feet, and six feet in diameter, four feet high from the ground. It was overflowing with crystal pure water, incessantly dripping from the roof.

When they reached the extreme end of the cave, the entrance seemed far away, like an oval of light. Although they spoke in hushed tones, their voices echoed from every corner, repeating themselves many times, giving the impression that the place was inhabited by numerous living creatures.

Muggerdich pointing to a hollow place at the bottom of the wall, said that there was a tradition about it. He related how a man used to brag of his fearlessness, how his companions challenged him to go alone in the middle of the night to the end of this cave and drive a stake in the ground. The man accepted the wager. Taking a hammer and a stake, he came to

this spot. He sat down and planted it into the hard earth. When he accomplished his task, he stood up, but found that he was caught. In his nervous state of mind, he could not comprehend the reason. Terror took hold of him. Being a superstitious man, he thought he was seized by affreets and djinns. "Let me go," he shouted. "Le me go," came the mocking echo from every dark corner. "La Illah, Il Allah," he prayed. The same was repeated half a dozen times by ghostly voices. He fell down dead. On the following day, his friends found his body, the end of his dress pinned under the post.

At the mouth of the cavern, Muggerdich told Dikran to look up. A round hole could be seen on the roof, scarcely two feet in diameter.

"There," he said, "is a room . . . where at one time lived a hermit."

"But how did he get to it?" asked Dikran.

"Do you see those niches on the wall nearby? That is the way up. It is not for everyone to climb, but there are those who can do it. Once there, it is perfectly safe; out of reach of every kind of danger."

While Dikran was examining the niches, which were hardly perceptible, Muggerdich took off his shoes and socks and threw them through the opening in the ceiling into the room, and began to climb. When he reached the top, he stretched out his left arm, caught hold of the edge of the hole, and drew himself through.

"You can come up too. Try it," he said from above.

Dikran tried it. He was a heavier man. However, after one or two unsuccessful attempts, merely by force of will power, he was able to reach the hole. There were grooves inside the edge, which he grabbed and crawled in.

It was a room fourteen feet by twelve in size. An aperture served for a window on the north side, from which the opposite hills could be viewed, with the intervening valley.

Dikran was delighted with the prospect. He was already planning in his mind. With a few men and enough provision (and ammunition), it would be possible to oppose a whole army. The enemy would not have a chance to come near the cave.

"What are these impressions in the floor?" he asked his companion. There were two cavities side by side on the ground. Muggerdich laughed. "They are supposed to be, ac-

ording to tradition, the knee marks of the hermits who lived here. Their frequent prayers left dents in the solid rock."

When they came down, Dikran said that this would be an ideal place for their training ground. We can easily defend ourselves if we are discovered. Only by besieging can the enemy have the best of us.

"But why should we be besieged, when there is a way of escape?" asked Khacher.

"How?"

"There is a secret passage in the rear of the cave," answered Khacher, "of which no one has any knowledge, except, perhaps a few shepherds like myself. "I found it one day when I was chasing a jackal, that had been preying upon my sheep. I saw him preparing to spring on a lamb. I raised my musket and aimed at him; but the flint missed fire. The jackal saw me, turned tail and ran away. Snatching up my club, I followed him. He entered the cave. 'Now I have trapped you,' I thought. He turned to the left in the dark. I felt sure I had caught my quarry this time. Looking this way and that to prevent his escape, I advanced. When I reached the corner where he had gone, he was not there. He had disappeared. I was sure he did not go back. Perhaps there was a hole, where he had made his den. I investigated. It was as I thought. I found a crack in the wall, large enough for a man to squeeze through. Drawing my knife, I crawled in. It was a long one. After taking about fifteen steps, I turned a corner and saw a light in the distance. My enemy had escaped, but I had made a discovery. The gap led to the other side of the mountain."

"That is interesting, Khacher," said Dikran. "Show me the place."

They all followed the discoverer. Soon they stood before the passage way. Dikran examined it and found that it was a natural tunnel. It must have been formed centuries ago, probably by an earthquake. The ground was stony. Evidently the floor had not been trampled by human feet.

Khacher led the way; the others followed in single file. When they came to the turn where the light could be seen, the passage became narrower. A man could hardly pass through. After a while they emerged into the open air. This side of the mountain was rugged and deserted. There was no danger of the place being visited by anybody; but to make doubly sure, they gathered stones and covered the entrance.

Before parting, Dikran told his men to keep the hidden passage strictly secret and not to reveal it even to their comrades.

After that, the Dripping Cave became the Revolutionary Headquarters. By setting two sentinels, they could go through their exercises without fear of being taken by surprise.

Month after month, they were preparing themselves for the coming encounter. The youth of Ourfa willingly joined in these activities. Perfect discipline and order prevailed among them. Every one was warmly attached to the two leaders.

Meanwhile Arusag had applied for and taken a position as a teacher in the girls' school. She did not, however, relinquish her patriotic obligations. Outside the school hours she gathered the older girls and other young women and taught them how to fight for their honor. "Contemptible is the woman," she said, "who would surrender to the Turk. It is better to die honorably than to be shut up in a Mohammedan house, to be the plaything of lewd and lascivious men." She related to them the story of Ripsimian Virgins, who, in order to keep their chastity unsullied, endured torture and death.

Sometimes under the pretense of an outing, she would take them to the Dripping Cave to join the young men in their target practice. Some of the girls showed remarkable ability in the use of fire arms. Among them Khanum Ketengian and Mariam Chilingirian rose to prominence for straight and unerring shooting. Arusag herself was recognized even among the men as a first class marksman.

The activities of the young people became so widely known that it could no longer be kept secret from the government. Unable to discover the leaders, the Mutasarif applied to the Reverend Ardavazt Kalendarian, the new prelate of the Apostolic Church, to help him to get at the revolutionaries. The Bishop said he knew no one in his congregation of rebellious intentions or acts. If there were men, who entertained such ideas, as the government suspected, he was not aware of it.

The governor was not satisfied with this evasive reply. To intimidate the prelate and bring more pressure to bear upon him, he ordered the arrest and imprisonment of certain outstanding members of his flock. This used to be the usual course of action in Turkey. Instead of trying to apprehend the persons wanted, the innocent parties were castigated.

The imprisonment of the men who had nothing to do with their movement angered the young people. They sent a secret message and offered to make a raid upon the jail and take them out by force. This proposition was flatly rejected by the prisoners. They did not want to give the government an excuse for another massacre. They answered that they would rather suffer and die, if necessary, than to see the repetition of the carnage of former days.

Upon the suggestion of Aryan a letter was written to the Mutasarif, acknowledging the formation of the Young Armenian Party, expressing its pacific aims, for the purpose of preparation for defense against lawless hordes, to assist the government in putting them down in case they attacked the peaceful population, as they did once before. That they were loyal subjects of the Sultan and paid their taxes regularly. They respectfully asked the Mutasarif to release those men who were unjustly suffering in prison, as they were absolutely innocent and had no connection whatsoever with the Party.

This letter was handed over to Nadim Bey, the commandant of the body of troops stationed in the city. He read it carefully and saw through it. The deferential words did not deceive him. He was not satisfied. Although nothing could be seen or heard out of keeping with the common run of life, yet he felt that something clandestine was going on behind closed doors.

In response to the appeal of the young Armenians, he doubled his watchfulness. Patrols walked the streets day and night.

During my banishment in Ourfa, I read in the papers that a general amnesty had been proclaimed for the political prisoners. I applied to the Mutasarif for my freedom. He ruled that the pardon did not include persons who were deported to their native town. There was no ground for this arbitrary judgement. I appealed to the Vali. To plead my cause I received leave of absence for thirty days to go to Aleppo. The Vali sent me to a special Commission, which had recently arrived from Constantinople, to examine the cases of political offenders. When they read my papers, which had been accumulating since my first entrance into Turkey, they found my guilt so great that instead of liberating me they decided to expatriate me. In a way I was not sorry. To identify me in the future, my photograph was attached to the passport and a statement inserted that I no longer could claim to be the sub-

ject of the Sultan and if returned to this country would forfeit my life and my possessions.

The zaptiah who accompanied me to the port of Alexandretta, pushed me into a boat and said: "Go to America or go to hell; but do not come back to Turkey."

This turned out to be to my advantage. Instead of going to hell, I went out of hell, as later events proved.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

" TO BE OR NOT TO BE "

*To be, or not to be; that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? To die to sleep
No more and, by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd.*

SHAKESPEARE

About this time the Central Government in Constantinople adopted a diabolical scheme of deportation and butchery. They dealt the Armenian nation the heaviest blow that she had ever received in all her existence. In each town they arrested the men and confined them in concentration camps. In the middle of the night, they were tied in groups and led outside the city to the place prepared for the purpose and put to death. The women and the children were given notice to get ready to leave their homes in twenty-four hours. Neither old age nor tender childhood was spared. Women with nursing babies at their breasts, women in their advanced stage of pregnancy, women tottering under the weight of years, were mercilessly driven away from their homes, to travel on foot, without protection, in the uneven and rough roads of Asia Minor. They had to sleep in the open, on the hard ground, without any covering. The food they had provided for themselves did not last more than two days. Hunger and thirst began to gnaw their vitals. Children clamored for bread. The weak and the infirm fell along the roadside, to perish miserably. Babies were born and the mother and child left without medical care. Walk, walk, walk, with tired knees and sore feet.

The nights were more terrible. They would be surrounded by Turkish and Kurdish villagers. For a piece of bread they had to sell their honor. The plight of young and good-looking girls was beyond description. No hiding in the crowd availed, no disfiguring of their faces saved them. They were taken away forcibly and violated. Every night the zaptiahs, who were escorting them, would walk among the crowd of women and select for themselves the best looking that they could find. Every man would take his victim out of the camp and

bring her back in the morning. Soon there were none left but those who did not look desirable. By the time they arrived at their destination in the Syrian deserts, hardly one third of the original number was alive. They were in tatters, well nigh naked and emaciated.

Some of the caravans of these deported women passed through Ourfa on their way south. They were not allowed to enter the city; they camped outside, in an old khan, on the right bank of the brook. Their condition was deplorable; they were hungry, thirsty and in rags. Some of them had not enough to cover their nakedness. They had been robbed of everything they had. But the people of Ourfa could not be prevented from going out to them and taking them food and clothing. They witnessed all this misery and wretchedness, (displayed before their eyes). They heard the blood curdling stories of their compatriots—stories of how the men were slaughtered, the young girls and children carried away, and the women ravished. It was harrowing, frightful more than flesh and blood could bear. The Armenians of Ourfa understood the Turkish way of massacring, outright killing; but this slow, lingering, frightful destruction of life was beyond comprehension.

Hardly had the first caravan passed, when it was followed by another. It continued this way, rank after rank, for weeks. They came from the north and went to the south. They were swallowed up in the deserts, as a stream of water is sucked up in a dry and arid land.

One group especially, was most pitiful. They were divested of almost all their clothing. The Turks named them "The Caravan of Nudes." What was left on them was torn into shreds, through which the bare hips and breasts could be seen, rendered reddish brown by exposure to the weather.

It was evident that the government had determined to solve the Armenian question by exterminating the Armenians in Turkey. In that case it is preferable to die fighting, than to be dragged from one's home and be starved to death miserably on the sands of Syria. The revolutionary leaders called a public meeting, to which all were invited, who desired to attend, to consider what steps should be taken, when the government ordered their deportation. There was a large crowd present, men and women. They did not take any precaution for secrecy. They had nothing to conceal. The discussion was car-

ried on openly. It was plainly seen that obedience to such an order did not find favor with a single individual. They had before their eyes the tangible proof in the caravans of the exiles the result of submission. When someone advanced a proposition to resist not a voice could be heard in opposition. Every man and woman preferred to die fighting, rather than be driven away into the wilderness, hungry and thirsty, to perish like dumb animals. Aryan stood up and spoke:

"Brothers and sisters, do not let us deceive ourselves. We are signing our death warrant by this resolution. I do not hold forth hope for victory. We are as the ancient Greeks used to say, between Scylla and Charybdis. In modern parlance, it means, between the devil and the deep sea. Our end has come as surely as I stand here before you. The question is how to die. To terminate our earthly life like brave men and honorable women defending ourselves, or fall in the hands of a cruel enemy to be tormented and murdered like cowards? The Japanese proverb says, 'It is sweet and fitting to die for one's country.' I have fully determined to die an honorable death, dispatching first as many of our foes as God gives strength to my arms."

Muggerdich Yotnaghberian, the Lion of Ourfa, stepped to the front and addressed the assembly: "Who talks of submission?" he shouted. "To tramp about in the wilderness, under the lash of those despicable zaptiahs, with bended heads, meekly obeying every word they utter? NEVER! To share the wretchedness of the poor women upon whom we have gazed with bleeding hearts, is not even thinkable. I do not know what others are going to do, but I and my comrades are going to fight to the bitter end—to the last drop of our blood. There will be a barrier raised around our quarters presently. After that no one can go out. I give notice now to every man and woman, who desires, to step out and take refuge with the Turks. There is a chance now. We do not want cowards to remain with us. Men who are not brave enough to stand behind a barricade and defend their homes, women who are afraid to die, who are willing to surrender to the Turk are free to go. I want all who stay with us to be of the caliber of which heroes are made. Let us have a division. Stand up. No harm will come to you." No one moved. There followed a silence. "You are all resolved to die rather than famish," he quoted, smiling. One of the men shouted: "We will stand behind you,

Muggerdich, in life, in death." . . . "Aye, to the end," responded the crowd, springing to their feet.

"All right. Sit down," Muggerdich said.

Then he turned to the women. "Now what do you say, women of Ourfa? The way is open before you. I will not urge you to remain. I cannot promise you safety. You can go over and save your lives. I will not describe the life that you shall live in a Moslem harem, in order not to influence you. You are free to choose now. The time will come when it will be too late. Any attempt to cross over after the hostilities begin will be punished by death."

Again no one stirred. For a few seconds the auditorium was in perfect silence; one might hear a pin drop.

At last Khanum Ketenjian, an ardent member of the Revolutionary Party, came forward and stood on the platform. "Comrades Dikran and Muggerdich, and men of Ourfa, speaking on behalf of my companions, The Girls Band, be it known unto you, that we are prepared to fight side by side with you, as long as we draw the breath of life. We have been trained to the use of arms by our leaders. I hope we shall show that their labor has not been lost on us. As for the women of the community generally, I believe I am voicing their sentiments, when I say that we would rather stay in our city and perish with the men, in the ruins of our homes, than be dragged out to be exposed to the unpitiful elements and savage treatment of brutal monsters. Have we not seen with our own eyes, in the miserable exiles passing through our city, to what deplorable condition submission would reduce us, if we are simple enough to believe the fair promises of the faithless Turk. We realize fully that we shall not survive this crisis. But what of that? Did not the dainty and delicate ladies of Armenia, on the day of Vartan the Brave's heroic resistance to the hordes of Persia, forget their effeminate frailty, and lay down their lives like indomitable martyrs? Let us prove that we are their worthy descendants. Of the two alternatives which you have placed before us—to go over to the Turk, or to remain here and help you and die with you—we have chosen to remain.

A tremendous cheer from the women greeted this speech.

The government had some knowledge of the existence of an armed force among the Armenians, but it did not have the means to ascertain how far the preparation for self-defense

had gone. They were planning a crushing blow with as little cost to themselves as possible. Therefore, Nadim Bey had recourse to espionage to acquire the necessary information. He employed Shakir, the spy, to act for him. He agreed to do so for a consideration; that is, appointment to a remunerative office in the government.

He soon informed the captain that the revolutionaries were armed to the teeth and preparing for a long siege.

The governor sent a letter addressed to the heads of the two churches—Prelate Ardavazt Kalendarian and Pastor Soghomon Akkelian—demanding that all the weapons be gathered from the people and surrendered to the government, and threatening the lives of those in prison, in case of disobedience. He used the same tactics that were employed in the previous massacre. But this time the Armenians were led by brave and daring young revolutionaries, in whose minds only one thought was uppermost—to die fighting. They entertained no hope for the prisoners under any circumstances. They were doomed to perish, like so many others, whatever the outcome of the encounter.

When the letter was not answered, word reached the two clergymen to repair to the government house on urgent business. The officer waited to accompany them for safe conduct. The Revolutionaries advised them not to go, suspecting treachery. Kalendarian, who was a timid and peace-loving man, obeyed the command of the governor and went. Akkelian, making an excuse of press of work, refused to go. The former never returned. He shared the fate of the other prisoners.

The next step was to deal with the revolutionaries directly. Outwardly still a peaceful method was followed. Nadim Bey volunteered to negotiate with them. He asked and received an appointment. Taking two policemen with him he proceeded to the audience chamber of the prelacy. He was surprised to see Muggerdich Yotnaghberian, whom he knew as a private in the Turkish army, at the head of the delegation. Muggerdich stood up and saluted his superior officer in due form. The latter asked, with masked contempt, if he was the man to negotiate on such a vital question. Muggerdich answered, "Yes, I am." He was a diminutive man, small in size and not striking in appearance, but he held his chin high and the eyes flashed out sparks of fire.

"I have come, in accordance with the governor's command, to demand all the fire arms that the Armenians possess, for the sake of peace and security. There is no necessity to arm yourselves; the government can take care of you," stated Nadim Bey.

"Fire arms? What fire arms?" asked Muggerdich innocently. "The common people have no fire arms. They are not soldiers; how can they have them? It is true that some of us have in our possession old muskets, which we use when we go out trading among the lawless Kurds and Arabs. These we are ready to give up on one condition."

"What is that condition?" asked Nadim Bey, swallowing his pride.

"That the government release all our prisoners, who have been jailed without any cause whatsoever. When they have been returned safely to their homes, then you come back and we will collect all the weapons and hand them to you."

"Very well, you do that. Then I will ask the governor to set free all the Armenian prisoners," stated Nadim Bey calmly, trying to control his temper.

"No, you have to take the first step. The release of these men will be a guarantee to us that we shall not be molested after we have delivered our arms."

"Have you no confidence in the government?" asked the captain indignantly. "You fulfill your duty of obedience, as a subject people, then we will protect you."

"Yes, I know, but we desire that this time you take the initiative," replied Muggerdich humbly.

"Who are you to bargain with the government?" shouted Nadim Bey with exhausted patience. "Are there no older and more experienced men, that I am compelled to parley with a private soldier. You have served in the army; have you forgotten the kind of punishment that is meted out to the man who lacks respect for a superior officer?"

"No, I have not forgotten, Nadim Bey," said Muggerdich, saluting him. "You see, the Government has cast all of our leading men into prison. Even the prelate was enticed to the government house, a few days ago, and . . . where is he now? No older men are left. When my companions heard that emissaries were coming from the governor, they elected me, unworthy as I am, to meet them."

The captain had a mind to order the policemen to arrest

Muggerdich and all the men with him. But on second thought, he decided to curb his zeal and to terminate the discussion amicably. Rising to his feet, he said: "I give you warning for the last time. If in twenty-four hours our demand to surrender your fire arms is not obeyed, you will suffer for it."

"I will communicate your warning to my comrades," answered Muggerdich, also rising.

Aryan and the other men, who were in the next room listening to the conversation, rushed in, when the Turks left. "Bravo! Muggerdich," cried Dikran. "You have added to your military ability the art of statesmanship. No better parley could have been carried on."

There was no time to lose. The critical moment had arrived. The work of preparation must be carried on to its completion without delay. To barricade the entrance to the Armenian quarter; to appoint captains and their aides to each position; to centralize all the foodstuffs and put them under one management; in one word to bring about system and method out of chaos, to assume the semblance of orderliness, were duties that required Herculean labors.

On the other hand the Turks were scheming to subdue these despised gjaours without wasting men and ammunition. Nadim Bey reported that the rebellion was directed by the revolutionaries. There was no use waiting for them to surrender their firearms. Only a handful of hard headed young men led the idiotic people to their destruction. If we could take that gang the rest would be easy. "I am going to employ Shakir to see if I can catch them in a bunch."

"Meanwhile we must dispose of the men in prison," declared the governor. "We have been keeping them as a bait, to induce the others to surrender. But it is evident that they are determined not to be deceived."

That same night the Armenian prisoners were taken out to a place called the "Valley of Satan," tied together by two's and three's, surrounded by a company of soldiers, and shot to death in cold blood.

A few days later recreant Shakir informed the captain that the revolutionary leaders were going to have a meeting in a certain house. Taking with him a force of fifty men, guided by Shakir, he invaded the place of meeting. Unfortunately the Armenian preparation was not yet completed. They progressed to the heart of the quarter without any opposition.

Nadim Bey quietly encircled the house where the revolutionaries had gathered. Suddenly the revolutionaries discovered that they were surrounded. Without a moment's hesitation, they took up their guns, but Aryan told them not to shoot. "We are not ready to commence the fight," he said. He asked Muggerdich to go to the roof and to negotiate with the Turk in order to gain time. Climbing on the roof, he leaped to the next house. From there he proceeded to the other buildings along the street, collecting the men and ordering them to take positions in the windows, with their guns pointed towards the soldiers. He enjoined them strictly not to fire unless he gave the signal.

Nadim Bey ordered Muggerdich to surrender, promising to spare their lives. "Will you not deport us, if we yield?" he asked, as if terrified at the sight of so many soldiers.

"Well, I cannot pledge that. But I tell you what I will do. I will solicit the governor for you, if he would consent to make an exception for the people of Ourfa and let them stay where they are."

"If he does not consent, what then?"

"Muggerdich, why are you so much afraid of the deportation? There is no cause for alarm. You will not be exposed to danger. Every precaution will be taken for your safety. Guardians will accompany the caravans, to protect the people against any molestation from the villagers. When peace is re-established, you can all come back and live in your own homes."

The Turk was altogether deluded by the meekness and submissiveness practiced by Muggerdich. He looked up to see if Aryan was ready and suddenly changed his tone. "What do you mean by saying, 'When peace is re-established'? he asked. "You mean that when you have ended our lives on the gallows and sent the helpless women and children to the wilderness to be destroyed, then there will be peace. That game is played out, my captain. That plan is obsolete. We are not going to be caught in a trap this time. Your prisons are empty now; you want new inmates. Where are those two hundred men? The backbone of the population of Ourfa. You think we do not know what happened to them. I can tell you the time and the place where they were slaughtered, and by whom. No, no, we have determined to die, and to die honorably. You have come to arrest us. Here I am; take me if you

have the courage. But before you move, cast a glance around."

Involuntarily the captain turned back. All the windows along the length of the street were bristling with rifles.

Nadim Bey swallowed once or twice and gave the order for retreat.

In Ourfa the Armenian and the Turkish quarters are definitely separated from each other. One can draw almost a straight line between the two sections. The Armenian houses were built along the sloping side of the hill called Tulfudoor, on the west side of the city, commanding a good view of the Turkish suburbs. The central part is occupied by the business section. The Court House and the barracks are located on the north, on the banks of the brook. Time was when the city was encompassed by a high wall, the broken remains of which can still be seen. The streets are narrow and dirty, like any other town in Turkey. From a distance, however, the city presented a beautiful picture, with its two splendid churches and numerous minarets, pointing to the skies.

The work of fortifying the entrances was commenced immediately. The most important fronts were:

1. The street that led to the lake, which is known, from time immemorial, by the name of Father Abraham. On the declivity, where the last Armenian house was situated, Aryan built a wall across the street and the necessary changes in the windows. Harootune Rastkelenian was appointed, with his group, to defend this point.

2. The section called Possbaghnic, the nearest approach to the public markets. Here the entrance was narrow, but easily accessible to the enemy. A strong barricade, however, remedied that disadvantage. Harootune Simian volunteered to take care of this position.

3. The corner of Massmanah, where the German Mission had a large carpet factory. On the east side of that building lay the main thoroughfare leading to the government house. On the west side, just over the road, a two story stone building, with windows overlooking the street, made a strong fortress, where half a dozen riflemen could keep out of the entrance any number of attackers. In this residence Levon Roomian stationed himself with a few comrades.

4. The Tulfudoor Hill, where Armenag Attarian commanded the defenders was the strongest of all positions.

There were other entrances, situated in such a way that

could easily be defended from the windows. The Turk would not dare to break through.

Five bands, those of Karnic Aprilian, Khosrov Tooliughian, Garnic Shamlian, Levon Cherchian and Vagharsh Mesrobian, were kept at the center, as a reserve force.

Dikran Aryan and Muggerdich Yotnabgherian divided the whole Armenian quarter between themselves. The former had his headquarters in the Protestant church and the latter in the Apostolic Church.

Three contingents were formed of the young women and girls, under the leadership of Arusag Ananian, Khanum Ketenjian and Miram Chilingirian. The last mentioned served as a reserve band. Of the former two, Arusag supported Aryan and Khanum cooperated with Muggerdich. Those women who could not take part in the fighting, attached themselves to various groups and volunteered to take care of the arms and ammunition.

At each station there were about half a dozen youths, under a leader, who performed the duty of messenger boys, forming a line of communication between the fronts and the Centers. In an emergency these boys would be sent to the divisional commanders to report the state of affairs.

A commissariat was organized, which concerned itself with catering for the entire community. All the provision stored in the houses were put under one management, to be used with care and economy. This body had an army of assistants, who carried food and water to the warriors and divided the necessary portions to each family, according to their numbers.

A Red Cross Society also came into existence, composed of both sexes. The school rooms were turned into hospitals, where the wounded could be treated more conveniently by the one of the two Armenian doctors, the other being forced to remain among the Turks to take care of their wounded. All the medicines of Apraham Attarian's drug store were transferred and kept in a safe place, under the charge of a physician. A number of women came forward to serve as nurses, who had been taught the elementary rules of nursing.

The clergy, pastor Soghomon Akkelian and Reverend Karekin Oskerchian and the rest of the priests, divided the positions among themselves, to visit the fighters and encourage

them. During the temporary calm, they conducted divine service and exhorted them to be faithful to the end.

There were a few Kurdish families in the Tulfudoor district. These were deported to the Turkish quarter.

The government had established a guard house near the Apostolic church, where a dozen soldiers kept watch day and night. They saw these preparations of the Armenians and wanted to inform the authorities, but they could not. At their first attempt, they found themselves prisoners. They were terror stricken, but the Armenians did not harm them. They were deprived of their arms and ammunition and at the beginning of hostilities sent back to where they belonged.

The Armenian families who happened to be residing beyond the line of attack, were removed to safer locations. Among these was the family of Shakir, the traitor. When the men went to transfer his wife and children, he was nowhere to be found. "The wicked flee when no man pursueth." Suspecting that his compatriots had seen him with the soldiers, in the act of betraying the meeting house of the leaders, he had taken refuge with the Turks. Yes, it was true, they had seen and recognized him, in his Mephistophelian conduct, although he had tried to hide himself behind the troops.

The Executive Committee wanted to get hold of him. They invited Shakir's wife to one of their meetings, pretending that they were deliberating a way out of their difficulty. They told her that they were looking for a man to act as an intermediary between the government and themselves, to settle the matter peacefully. "Do you think your husband would be kind enough to save us from this critical situation? We are willing to submit to the authorities, if someone could persuade them to promise to let us remain in our own homes, instead of being deported."

"I do not know," she answered. "If you wish, I will go and speak to him."

"Do so, please. Bring him here, so that we could tell him exactly what we want. I am sure he can help us."

The same night Shakir presented himself to the Committee and expressed his readiness to act as their emissary. He felt sure that he would succeed. In his own mind he had already decided the high office he could lay claim to.

"I am glad to see you, Shakir effendi," said Muggerdich.

"You think you can transact this business for us?"

"I am sure I can," replied Shakir.

"Well, you are used to that kind of occupation, no doubt."

"What do you mean?"

"What do I mean? I mean that you were employed the other day by the government, when you led Nadim's contingent to the house where we had gathered. If we had all been caught and taken to the gallows, you would have had your reward, would you not have? As it was, we spoiled your little game, by being too wide awake and resourceful, to be delivered tamely into the hands of our enemies. It was unobliging of us, was it not?"

Willing hands tied his arms behind his back.

"Now, what have you to say for yourself in justification? Can you deny it?"

Shakir dared not say a word.

"You realize that you were willing to send a whole community to destruction for a puny emolument. You deserve death, no less."

It was soon decided to execute by hanging. They took the corpse down, wrapped it in sacking and put it on a stretcher. One of the teachers, who was conversant with Turkish characters, wrote the following words on a piece of paper:

"A PRESENT TO NADIM BEY, FROM the Revolutionary Committee."

In the small hours of the morning, when the streets were deserted, two men carried the stretcher with the lifeless body of Shakir to Captain Nadim's residence. They dumped the corpse at the door, pinned the label on its chest and departed.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

THROUGH BLOOD AND FIRE

*Pile the bodies high at Austerlitz and Waterloo.
Shovel them under and let me work—
I am the grass; I cover all.
And pile them high at Gettysburg,
And pile them high at Ypres and Verdun.
Shovel them under and let me work.
Two years, ten years, and passengers ask the conductor;
What place is this?
Where are we now?
I am the grass.
Let me work.*

CARL SANDBURG

The morning dawned in breathless calm, the precursor of the storm that was brewing. A light mist mantled the city. Suddenly the bells of the two churches began tolling, slowly, intermittently, like a knell. With these the voices of the muez-zins were mingled, from the minarets, in melancholy tones. Both Christian and Moslem had the premonition that the day of crisis had arrived.

The sun rose, a huge blood-red ball, its rays penetrating through the clouds, painting scarlet everything they touched.

Panic and horror convulsed the family of Nadim Bey that morning, when the dead body was discovered. Children cried, women screamed, men ran here and there, not knowing what to do. At last his orderly knocked at the captain's bedroom door.

"What is it?" came his voice from inside.

"A corpse has been thrown at our threshold," answered the man.

Already much provoked, the officer leaped from his bed and ran to the door. Reading the paper and recognizing the victim, he turned white. So they add insult to injury. "We shall see," he murmured. He ordered the corpse removed and buried.

The authorities took this deed as a challenge. They determined to make short work of the whole Armenian population on that very day. The bugles sounded everywhere and the expectant mobs gathered at the courthouse. They were sent out in groups of several hundred each, to various points of attack.

The Armenians on their part were not idle. According to a previous arrangement, as soon as the sound of the bugles was heard, the bells began to ring clamorously. This time not to call the faithful to prayer, but to warn the fighters to be ready. The group captains had their instructions. They kept themselves behind the barricades unseen and waiting in perfect silence. No sign of activity was visible.

The Turks thinking that the Armenians were hiding in their houses, advanced boldly, with the expectation of an easy victory and plenteous booty, until the narrow streets were closely packed with a motley crowd. Suddenly a rain of bullets poured upon them and a dozen hand-grenades exploded in their midst. Volley after volley showered from the windows and the barricades, dealing fearful destruction to the rabble. The dead and the dying carpeted the roadway. Those who escaped the bullets turned tail and ran.

This first attempt sobered government officials. They realized that they were confronted by serious resistance. Of course, Nadim Bey knew that the revolutionaries were armed more or less; but such an organized opposition, provided with modern weapons of warfare, was beyond any expectation.

The next attack was made with more caution, under experienced leadership. But it was no use, they could not come near the line of demarcation. As soon as a Turk showed himself at the end of the street, he would be shot down from an unknown direction. Only after dark the firing ceased and they were allowed to come nearer and gather their dead and wounded.

On the following day a council was held in the governor's office to which Herr Echart, the head of the German Mission, was invited. The question under consideration was — How to subdue the rebellious Armenians without much Moslem loss.

Herr Echart reported that there were about a hundred workers in his factory, mostly women, who asked him to be allowed to remain under his protection, when the hostilities broke out. Could we use them as hostages and threaten their lives, to see if these foolhardy revolutionaries will put down their arms and submit to deportation?

"That would not help," answered the governor. "We have tried that method before. I promised to spare the lives of the two hundred of their leading men, if they would sur-

render their weapons. They did not; they are too wary to fall into a trap."

"I tried the minarets," said Nadim Bey; "but it did not work. Half a dozen soldiers, stationed on the top of the high and strong minaret of the Grand Mosque, endeavored to find a vulnerable point at which to shoot. They could see nothing but closed doors and windows and blank walls. I went up myself and surveyed the whole situation with field glasses. Their defenses are wonderfully well camouflaged. The place looks like a peaceful city. Nobody is stirring, the streets are deserted. No sign of any kind that a struggle for life or death was raging. There must be a man of military education among them, who is directing the operations. Those unwarlike Armenians of Ourfa could not possibly achieve such results. While I was occupied in reconnoitering the redoubts in the Tulfudoor section, a bullet whizzed past my head, missing me by an inch. I saw a wisp of smoke rise from the direction of the American Mission. Whoever it was, seeking to shoot me, evidently had a pair of binoculars, by means of which, he saw and recognized me. Who could the man be?"

"Why that is plain. There is Mr. Leslie, the American Missionary," said Herr Echart. "He is in sympathy with the Armenian rebellion."

"These Americans come to our country under the pretense of religious and educational instruction and stir up political discontent," added the Chief of Police. "Their ulterior motive is political, I am sure."

"Mr. Leslie is the citizen of a friendly nation; you cannot arrest him," stated Nadim Bey.

"We will dispose of him, somehow," said the governor. "Meanwhile, you military men must find a way to break through this incredible resistance of a bunch of desperadoes."

"What about bombarding them?" some one suggested. "We have two cannons. They are old fashioned, no doubt. Can they be made use of?"

"Not a bad idea," added the governor. "Echart Effendi is an expert on ordinance. I will ask him to join with Captain Nadim Bey and give a thorough examination. If these pieces could be employed, it would be easy with a few projectiles to destroy all the defenses of the insurgents."

Herr Echart consented to do so. With the captain he went downstairs to the courtyard where the guns were located.

A cursory investigation proved to him that they were not safe to use for any explosive missiles. But he said nothing about it to his companion. He thought: what if a few Turkish soldiers were killed, if a certain purpose could be accomplished. He knew very well that no damage could be done to the Armenian defenses, by these old and rusty cannons, but the moral effect would be great. The noise of the bombardment and the explosion of the shots would create such terror that they would be willing to surrender.

Herr Echart and Nadim Bey decided to drag the cannons up to the old citadel, which commanded a good view of the Armeian quarter and to try them.

The first few shots were successful. The balls fell right among the houses. Some exploded, some did not but little damage was done. The breech of one of them burst, killing the gunners; the muzzle of the other fractured scattering fragments of iron all around.

What Herr Echart had guessed was true. The Armenians were terrified, especially the women, but soon their fears were allayed. Pastor Akkelian gathered the pieces of the shells and going around showed them to the people and told them not to be excited: "See, I am handling them; they are perfectly harmless."

The Turks concentrated their attack on one front. The open courtyard of Massmanah where the German factory was located, offered a good starting point. A large crowd gathered there under the direction of Herr Echart. Besides the industrial institution of rug making, which employed hundreds of men and women, the German missionaries had orphanages for boys and girls. They had been great friends of the Armenians and had helped them financially and educationally, but at this crisis, Herr Echart turned against them. His conduct was not in accordance with the general policy of the Mission.

Dr. Lepsius, the president of the society, did his utmost, pleading with the Turkish authorities to stop the deportations. The antagonism of Herr Echart was purely individual. He told me once that he was a captain in the German army. At any time that his country was at war, he had to give up the mission work, don his military uniform and go on duty. He was doing that now; helping the Turk, the German's ally, and fighting the enemy, the Armenians. It did not enter his mind that he was helping to destroy the people, among whom he

had labored for years. He did not spare even his most intimate friends. Excepting a number of workers and servants who remained in his establishment, he refused to give shelter to those seeking his protection.

Opposite Massmanach was the Tamir position, commanded by Levon Roomian, an intrepid and fearless young man, in his early twenties, hardened by many adventures against the Turks. He suspected that something was brewing behind the high wall. Let them come; he was ready.

The assault began with a fearful loss of life on the part of the Turks. But they had a skillful leader. He had stationed snipers at strategic points. They shot down the person that appeared above the parapet. From the windows of the factory, from the roof of the building, from the temporary ramparts, bullets showered the Armenian position. Neither side dared to come out of their breastwork. They were on a par with each other. For a long minute the firing ceased. Levon ventured to the corner window to survey the situation; for a second he was off his guard. Eckhart's chance had come. A bullet from an unseen loophole in the wall shattered Roomian's forehead. He was well known among the Turks. His escapades were the talk of the coffee houses. With a shout of triumph the rabble rushed at the defenders, urged forward by their commander. They stormed the barricade, leaped over the breastwork and pursued the retreating Armenians. Word reached Aryan of what had happened. Taking his reserve force, he hastened to the place of the disaster. By the time he encountered the enemy, they had arrived at Sahakian corner, midway between the Evangelical Church and Massmanah, the defenders disputing every foot of ground of the enemy's advance. The new arrivals heartened them. The street here was so narrow and packed with humanity that they could not use their guns easily. Aryan had brought with him a few grenades. These he threw into the Turkish crowd creating consternation. At the same time he called out to his men to draw their daggers and fall on the enemy. So unrelenting and ruthless was the onslaught, that the Turks lost courage and turned back. Soon the street was cleared, and the dead and the wounded were heaped on each other. The Armenians re-occupied the barricade and began to repair the damage.

Herr Echart was furious. He cursed the rabble for their

cowardice — those who would run away before a handful Armenians, one-twentieth of their number.

About this time it so happened that a large Turkish army under the command of Fakhry Pasha was passing through the district twenty miles south of Ourfa, on the way to the Baghdad front. The Mutasarif appealed to him to send a contingent of soldiers to help subdue the insurrection. Fakhry refused to turn aside from his course, but when he heard of the disastrous consequences of using the old guns, he consented to lend them a cannon with half dozen gunners.

The Armenians heard of this. The leaders knew what devastation a modern cannon could work on their positions. They called a council of war. There were present the two commanders, the heads of the troops; Arusag, Khanum and Mariam from the women's division.

The prospect was discouraging. They tried to surmise where the cannon would be installed. If they knew they could arrange their defenses accordingly. Tulfudoor Hill was well protected; there was no danger on that side. The old fortress on the south of the city had a good command of the Armenian quarter, but it was noted that the way up was so steep and rough that a modern cannon with its terrific weight could not easily be transported there. The only practical position would be the eastern side, behind the Turkish houses, where there was an open field, visible from some of the barricades.

"In that case it would be difficult to defend ourselves," said one of the leaders.

"The situation is critical," added another.

"There is no reason to despair," rebuked Muggerdich. "We will find a way out of it. We will fight to the last drop of our blood. What was our determination at the beginning, when we started this rebellion? It was to die fighting, doing as much damage to the enemy as we could. The lion at bay is more dangerous. Only weaklings give way."

The words of Muggerdich deeply affected all those present and they were once more filled with new enthusiasm and animation.

"Comrades, there is no alternative," declared Khanum. "We are facing death. Let us encounter it fearlessly. At the start, when we resolved on this war, did we not know that we were delivering our death sentence? Let me remind you of the words of Shakespeare:—

'Cowards die many times before their Death;
The valiant never taste of death but once.
Of all the wonders that I yet have heard,
It seems to me most strange that men should fear;
Seeing that death, a necessary end,
Will come when it will come.'

Again the company was electrified with new courage. Cannon or no cannon, they had chosen to die fighting. Who is the most intrepid man or woman? He or she who is not afraid of death; who has decided to die with honor; who prefers to be sacrificed for freedom, rather than live a life of slavery. These men and women were of such stuff of which heroes are made.

Sarkis, the younger brother of Muggerdich, who was blind in one eye, asked if it would be possible to put the cannon out of commission by dislocating some parts of it.

"Yes, it is possible," answered Aryan, who had been silent until that moment. "I was planning the same thing in my mind. The cannon could be handled in such a way that it would be rendered useless. I am going to ask for volunteers to accompany me for this work. Who will come with me?"

"There is no need to go in a group," said Sarkis. "I am ready to do the job alone, if I knew how to demolish it. If I am caught, at least I shall be the only one to be sacrificed."

"You are a brave soldier, Sarkis," said Aryan. "I will tell you what to do. The modern cannon is built in such a way that the breech can move from right to left. The wheel that controls these movements turns on an axis. This in turn is kept in its position by a screw, which is situated just under the hammer. If that screw could be removed, the gun becomes dangerous to those using it. Can you take away that screw?"

All the comrades were looking fixedly at Sarkis. They could see his one eye sparkling and felt that this fearless young man would be able to perform the duty undertaken by him.

Sarkis asked a few questions and learned his lesson. That very night putting in his pocket the necessary tools, he climbed over the ruined walls of the city, passed the Turkish cemetery, crept unseen by the sentinels and took the road leading to Serouge, where the gun was located. After walking about three miles, he descried a group of soldiers who were camping

along the side of the highway. When he came nearer, he saw that only one was awake guarding the cannon.

Sarkis approached cautiously. Stealing through the rocks he came to the place where the soldiers were resting. The guard, unaware of any danger, was leaning on the wheel of the gun, smoking. Suddenly a dagger plunged into his heart and without a sound he fell dead. Sarkis, feeling his way, found the hammer of the cannon and the screw under it. Taking a strong screw driver from his pocket he tried to unscrew it. At first it would not move. Gathering all his strength, he turned it. Gradually it yielded, until it came out altogether. He put it in his pocket and rose to go. In the dark he touched the foot of one of the sleepers. The man awoke and wanted to know who had stepped on his foot. When he got no answer, he sprang from his place and grasped his rifle. He saw the dead body of his comrade and called out to the others.

The rifles began to roar. They were shooting aimlessly, as they did not know what had happened, or where the enemy was.

Sarkis, meanwhile, thinking that he might be caught or killed and the screw found by the soldiers, took it from his pocket and threw it down in the valley among the stones. Holding his gun he stood behind a boulder and waited. When the soldiers fired again, he dropped bullets in their direction. He was sure that at least one of them found its mark. The soldiers withdrew and took position behind the rocks, suspecting that the attackers were many.

The cannon was brought to the city on the following day. It was useless.

Another time the Turks tried to storm the Poss Baghnic front. This position was considered the weakest. To enter the Armenian quarter, one had to pass under a covered archway. The barricade was established outside that entrance. The street was very narrow and only a certain number of defenders could be stationed there.

The soldiers from Fakhry Pasha's army, who had been frustrated in the defense of the cannon, led the attack. They were inflamed with anger and wanted to show what they could do. With their heavy rifles, discharging volley after volley, from a distance, they succeeded in demolishing the barrier. The rabble entered the archway, where they were comparatively safe.

The surviving Armenians were left between two fires. Surrender was out of the question. They fought valiantly against the regular soldiers and a multitude of bashibozouks, until the last man fell (taking a toll from the enemy of twice as many dead).

The Turks rushed in great numbers in the direction of Saint Mary's Cathedral and only halted at the thick walls of the building. Muggerdich was there waiting for them. He had a way of roaring like a lion. He would put his fingers to his mouth and blow in imitation of a trumpet, sending a shiver through the mob. His roaring was heard, but they did not know which way to look for him. Suddenly a number of grenades exploded among the crowd. Terror stricken, they took to their heels. The Armenians pursued them, while from the windows of both sides of the street bullets showered upon them. Muggerdich was in his element. Elated by success he roared louder and louder. "Do not run away you cowards; you murderers of women and children. Stand and fight." To his followers, he said: "Remember the '95. The hour of vengeance has arrived. Show by an honorable death that you are Armenians, worthy descendants of your heroic forefathers."

Once more raising his throaty voice, he charged the enemy with such violence that they did not stop, until they took refuge in the Turkish quarter.

Arrived at the barricade, Muggerdich ordered the place to be rebuilt. After seeing that everything was in order, he turned to go back to his headquarters. On the way he felt faint. He was wounded in his thigh, and had lost much blood. Comrades helped him and led him to the hospital.

Khanum Ketenjian had thirty young women in her contingent. They were all well trained as fighters and proficient in marksmanship. They had gathered their long hair under woolen caps and were dressed in man's clothing. Each one carried poison pills, to use in case of being caught alive. They had determined to commit suicide in order not to fall into the hands of the Turks.

Khanum presented herself to Muggerdich and asked permission to attack the Turkish guard house situated near the lake of Father Abraham and destroy it. "The zaptiahs," she said, "in that guard house are continually harassing our position on that front and doing much damage. They go up on

the roof of the mosque and shoot the men behind the barricade."

Muggerdich, although admiring the women's courage, was diffident to give his consent. "It is a tough job, Khanum; are you equal to it?"

"We will try it, sir. If we are sacrificed in our attempt, you may be sure that our lives will cost dearly to the enemy. I have my plan here on this paper. I hope you will approve of it."

Then she showed him a chart indicating the location of the guardhouse, with the adjoining streets; where to take position and when; how to begin the assault and so on. Muggerdich was looking at the sketch with undisguised amazement. "Who drew this plan?" he asked.

"We did," she answered.

"Very well, then, you have my permission. Only be careful. You all realize what it means to fall in the hands of the Turks alive."

"No fear of that, I assure you."

Khanum, with a smile, gave a military salute to her beloved commander and departed.

Let me tell here in passing, that the Lake of Father Abraham is considered holy by the population of Ourfa, both Christian and Moslem, on account of a tradition related about it. From of old, it is supposed that Ourfa is the Ur of Chaldees of the Old Testament, where Abraham was born. When God revealed himself to the Patriarch, he began to preach the only and true God. His fellow countrymen, who were idol worshipers, would not accept his preaching. He continued, however, to proclaim the message of one true God, until a fierce persecution started against him, instigated by the priests of the tutelary god of the city. They got hold of him and raised him on a high pile of wood to make a burnt offering of him to their god. When the fagot was lighted, Abraham stood up, stretching his hands to heaven, prayed to God, in whom he believed, to open the eyes of these poor, ignorant idolaters, to see the truth. Suddenly, from under the pile of woods, gushed a spring of water which quenched the fire. The spectators were amazed, seeing the miracle. They took Abraham down, and believed in the God whom he preached.

It is the lake that was formed from this spring of water, that became sacred until this day. During the Christian cen-

turies, a church was built on its shores and theological seminary was established in the garden adjoining it, the ruins of which can be seen even today. After the seizure of the city by the Mohammedans, the church was converted into a mosque; and as the Moslem religion recognizes Abraham as the Father of the faithful, they believed in the tradition and kept the waters of the Lake inviolate. It is full of fish, which are not allowed to be caught. Moreover, it is considered a virtuous act to feed them. Consequently they are so tame that they follow in shoals anyone walking along the shore, with the expectation of food. They can be touched almost by the hand.

There was a bridge near the lake on which the Turkish guardhouse was built. About an hour after midnight, Khanum, with her followers, took a position around the guardhouse, stationing them on various strategic points. She could see from a distance that two zaptiahs stood sentry outside the entrance of the building. Two girls, pointing their guns at the sentinels, noiselessly followed her. When they were sufficiently near, she gave the order and they fired. Both bullets found their mark and the men fell to the ground. Those inside awakened and ran to their arms.

The women surrounded the guardhouse. The officer in charge cautiously approached the door to find out what had happened. A bullet flattened itself against the wall near where he was standing. At the same time, a woman's voice ordered him to surrender. The Turk felt insulted. What, to surrender to a woman! He had heard that the Armenian women were fighting shoulder to shoulder with the men; but to be assailed by them in his own station was intolerable. He gave the order to charge and the inmates, a dozen zaptiahs, lifting their weapons, contemptuously rushed out. A volley from an unseen enemy wrought havoc among them, throwing half of the men to the ground. The survivors retreated and took shelter in the building.

There followed a regular warfare. The Turks firing from the windows into the darkness outside; while the Armenians had a good target, dropping their bullets inside the rooms.

After a while the firing ceased from the guardhouse. Khanum, stealing through the darkness, approached one of the windows and looked in. There was no sign of life. Only dead bodies lying on the floor in various positions. She entered to investigate. The body of the officer could not be found

anywhere. She saw a back window wide open. He had escaped with his life.

Khanum took a whistle from her pocket, blew the call for assembling. When the fighting women came out from their hiding places and surrounded her, she read the names from a small book. All answered present, without an exception. Then they gathered the guns and the remaining cartridges of the Turks and set fire to the guardhouse. When the flames were well spread, and they were assured that the building could not be used any longer, they left the scene of fighting in military order, singing a song of victory.

From the Armenian position, higher up the hill, the men, who were watching all the time, saw them returning in triumph, met them with shouts of joy.

On the following day, when the Turks discovered what had happened, they decided to make short work of the rebellion by concentrating their main forces in one position and give a crushing blow to end this foolery of continued fighting once for all. Their anger had no bounds especially on hearing from the escaped officer that the destruction was wrought by a company of women. It was unthinkable that a group of women dared to attack a government institution and massacre men in military uniform. The Moslem dwellers of the neighboring section of Calaboyun, a fierce and blood-thirsty race of Kurds, were exceedingly excited, taking this as a challenge, because the scandalous act was perpetrated in their vicinity, they swore to revenge the insult, by putting the men to the sword and capturing the women alive.

The attack was organized by the captain. The assault was so fierce that, though they lost many, they succeeded in taking the Lake Abraham position. Encouraged by this first success, they advanced, with the help of new arrivals, and entered the Armenian quarter. Here they met the women's contingent, who disputed every foot of ground against their further advance.

A party of Turks seeing one of the side streets unguarded, ran towards it, intending to cut the line of retreat of the women. They turned the corner quickly and accomplished their purpose. The women were left between two fires, fighting desperately and losing very heavily. The intention of the attackers, however, was to capture them alive. In spite of the rain of bullets, they advanced in large numbers and at last

took captive only five girls. Their hands were tied behind their backs and they were sent out of the fighting line to be left under the care of the captain.

At this time, Muggerdich was suffering excruciating pain from his wound. His whole leg was swollen because of lack of proper medical attention. He could hardly move. When he heard of the disastrous consequences of the Turkish attack on the Lake Abraham position, he sent orders to the Abrilian band of the reserves to come forward and join battle. They took their stand in the street adjoining the walls of the Cathedral and fought like tigers, selling dearly every step of the enemy's advance. But there was no limit to the hostile mob. Newcomers took the place of the fallen.

Abrilian himself performed great acts of bravery. Standing before the mixed crowd, he shot them down unsparingly, but at last he fell dead from the many wounds he had received.

Once more word was brought to Muggerdich of the sad plight of the Armenian fighters and the utter annihilation of the Abrilian band. He threw his blankets away and ordered his horse to be brought. He climbed on it with the help of his men and ran to the next redoubt and told its defenders to follow him. Now at the head of this group was a young man, Khosrov Touloughian by name, a survivor of the 1895 massacre, who had seen his father and uncle slaughtered cruelly, and had been an eye witness to the violation of his mother by a dozen demons in human shape. He was consumed with a longing for vengeance and was waiting for a chance to have his accounts settled with the Turk. He gladly gathered his companions and followed their commander.

"Boys, are you ready to die?" asked Muggerdich. "I am leading you to certain death. The enemy is one hundred times more numerous.

"But before you fall, see that you square accounts with him. Forward, then." Mustering his fast ebbing strength with a last desperate effort, he let loose his usual deep toned rousing battle cry. The rabble heard and recognized it. They always associated it with an irresistible onslaught. They were unnerved.

Khosrove saw his advantage. Running through the maze of houses, they took positions on both sides of the street where the mob was thickest and by a flanking attack, cut the retreat of the advance party. When the Turks heard shooting behind

them, they were utterly demoralized and ran helter-skelter in unknown blind alleys and were disposed of easily. The main body, however, turned back, pursued by Touloughian's band, until they were clear beyond Lake Abraham redoubt. Muggerdich returned to the hospital almost dead. The Band gathered together to take the roll-call. They had lost heavily. But where was Khosrove? He was not among them. They found him leaning against a wall breathing hard. Blood was running from his many wounds. Gradually he opened his eyes and a smile spread over his face. Looking at his comrades, he said, "I have avenged my father and mother. I die contented. Do not give way. Fight on until the end."

Meanwhile another act of this tragic drama was being played in the garden just over the bridge. Captain Nadim Bey, seated on a chair, had the five captive girls in front of him, and was questioning them.

"What is your name?" asked the Captain, addressing the young woman, who had an orange colored cross on her cap.

"Khanum," answered she.

"Khanum what?"

"Khanum Ketenjian."

"Ha! I have heard of you. Are you not the daughter of Toros Ketenjian?"

"I am."

"How will you show your gratitude, if I spare your life?"

"By going back to continue the fight," answered Khanum.

"The cause of the Armenians is hopeless," said the Captain. "They cannot last much longer. The cannon, which we have ordered, has already left Aleppo. It will arrive in a day or two. A dozen shells, well aimed, will be enough to destroy the entire Armenian quarter. What will you do then?"

"We will die fighting," replied Khanum.

"Very well, then, if you are so foolishly stubborn, let the men fight. Why do you mix yourselves with them? It is a pity that young and good looking girls as you are should be sacrificed. You are destined to a better life. Surrender to us and marry with whom you choose and you will have a happy time."

"We prefer to die rather than be the wives of Turks," said Khanum.

This was heard by the rabble. Their wild nature stirred

up. They shouted and gesticulated. They threatened violence. "Deliver them to our hands. We will show them what it means to insult a whole Turkish nation."

But the Captain quieted them. Turning to the girls he said:

"Do you hear what they say? If you will not submit with a good grace, they will take you by force. Khanum, I am willing to take you to be my wife. Let the other girls pick the men they would like to marry. There will be no force used. Every one is free to choose. In this way the difficulty will be solved and you will save your lives with honor."

"With dishonor, you mean," said Khanum.

The Captain changed color. The wild beast awoke in him. Torn with passion he stood up and coming nearer, struck her hard in the face.

"You giaour slut! You consider it a dishonor to marry me, do you? Wait a minute. I will teach you! You will soon be sorry for your insolence!"

He ordered his soldiers to surround the women and point their rifles at them. He called a corporal and told him to strip the clothing from off the girls, one by one. The officer approached and removed the garments of one of them. The crowd was watching with savage relish. The poor girl could not resist; her hands were tied behind her back.

"Release her arms," commanded the Captain. "She cannot escape in this crowd," he mocked, with a sarcastic smile.

The first girl was undressed, standing stark naked among those howling demons. She was the object of lascivious gazes. The same process was gone through with the second. They were being compared with one another and obscene remarks were thrown at them.

The turn had come to Khanum. She asked that her hands be untied, saying that she would undress herself without any assistance. The Captain gave his consent. They freed her arms. She moved them up and down to ease the circulation of the blood. She began to unfasten the buttons of her jacket with both hands.

The corporal stood aside. The Captain was leering with lustful eyes. She lifted the corner of her waistcoat and suddenly drawing a small revolver, emptied its contents into the Captain's head, heart and stomach, in rapid succession. He

slumped from his chair to the ground. When the soldiers saw what had happened, without a moment's thought they discharged their guns at the women. All five fell dead.

The mob was wonderstruck, looking on the tragedy with gaping mouths. They never expected such courage, such heroism from a persecuted and downtrodden race of women.

These Armenian heroines were martyred, dying bravely, keeping their honor, worthy descendants of their chaste ancestress, Saint Ripsimia, the Virgin.

Khanum Ketenjian lived bravely and died heroically. Paraphrasing Milton's eulogy of the death of Samson Agonistes:—

“Come, come; no time for lamentation now,
Nor much more cause. Khanum hath quit herself
Like Khanum, and heroically hath finished
A life heroic, on her enemies
Fully revenged—hath left them years of mourning,
And lamentation to the sons of Osman
Through all Mesopotamian bounds.”

CHAPTER TWENTY

THE BEGINNING OF THE END

*Hark! Forth from the abyss a voice proceeds,
A long low distant murmur of dread sound,
Such as arises when a nation bleeds
With some deep and immediate wound:
Through storm and darkness yawns the rending ground;
The gulf is thick with phantoms, but the chief
Seems royal still, though with his head discrown'd.*

BYRON

The government's expectation at last found fulfillment. When they saw that the cannon sent by Fakhry Pasha had become foul and useless, they appealed to the Vali of the province for help. In due time two field pieces arrived from Aleppo, under the command of a German officer. They were installed, one on the side of Lake Abraham and the other against the Masmanah front. The first was commanded by Major Ovackel and the second by Herr Echart, both able gunners. It was child's play for them to bombard these makeshift positions. At the first burst of the shells, it was evident to the defenders that the beginning of the end had arrived. The barricades crumbled like clay. The stone masonry of the houses fell in heaps. Consternation spread on all sides. Panic stricken people ran hither and thither seeking safety. The roaring sound of the guns was terrifying. The thunder of the bursting shells sent a shiver through the most stout hearted fighters. Pathetic was the plight of those brave defenders. Men, women; young and old; were buried alive under the ruins. Destruction advanced from street to street. Not even the churches were spared. And yet no sign of surrender appeared anywhere.

All of the positions of the Armenians had fallen, except the one at the headquarters of the American Mission, which Dikran and Arusag were defending. The strong walls of the Evangelical Church had protected it. Echart, who had often preached the Gospel of love and peace from its pulpit, deliberately turned his cannon towards it and shelled its dome. The people under it were killed by falling masonry. But the walls were still standing.

The entire Armenian section of the city was a heap of ruins. There was not a building undamaged. The devastation was so complete that one could see from end to end. It had the appearance of a great grave yard. Everywhere dead bodies

could be seen, some of them half buried.

The women survivors of the bombardment ended their lives by poison, the men by shooting themselves. Muggerdich Yotnaghberian, the intrepid fighter, mortally sick from a gangrenous leg, unable to move from his bed, drew his dagger and plunged it into his heart.

Reverend Karekin Oskerchian, a learned and well beloved priest, had managed to escape into the vineyards with his wife. He brought a stone and put it under her head, and divided the contents of a small vial into two parts. He gave one part to her and swallowed the other, himself. They lay down side by side and went to sleep, to awake together in eternity.

Pastor Soghomon Akkelian was taken alive. He would not commit suicide, neither would he ask for mercy, although he saw Herr Echart among his judges, who had been a co-worker with him many years, in the religious work of the community. He walked to the gallows unafraid. Reverend Akkelian was an able-bodied, stalwart man. Under his heavy weight the rope broke and he fell to the ground. According to Mohammedan law, if the rope breaks during the hanging, the condemned is set free. The *cadi*, who was present, remembered this law and reminded the governor of it. But the authorities knowing the part that he had played during the fighting and the influence that he had exerted to continue the resistance, would not listen to any excuse. Meanwhile Akkelian picking the pieces of the rope, threw them at the Turks, saying "This rope is rotten like yourselves; bring a stronger one." He was shot.

Sarkis, the one-eyed, wounded and insensible, was taken prisoner. The Turks recognized him, as his daring exploits were well known among them. When the Mutasarif heard of his capture alive, he wanted to save his life and employ such a brave young man for some purpose. Under good care, Sarkis regained consciousness. The governor asked him what he would do if his life were spared. Would he be good and serve him as a bodyguard? "Yes," answered Sarkis, "I will be good and the first thing I will do will be to murder you."

The Mutasarif made a sign with his hand towards the gallows. Sarkis pushed aside his executioners, put the rope around his own neck, and kicked the chair from beneath his feet.

After the gunners had done their part, hordes of Moslem crowds spread themselves for pillage and plunder. They were searching among the masonry for valuable furniture; recovering from the ruins costly Persian carpets; digging up the dead bodies of women and robbing them of their ornaments and jewelry. If they found any person still alive, they would kill him then and there.

One band of robbers suddenly halted. A bullet from among a heap of stones struck one of them dead. They began to run. A second bullet followed, with the same effect. The sound of a third one was heard, but they were out of reach. After a while, when quiet was restored, they approached cautiously to the spot where a survivor had dared to shoot at them. They found the dead body of a girl, half buried under a pile of rubbish, her legs crushed and a bullet in her heart. It was Mariam Chilingirian, another heroine of the desperate fight for self protection. Who knows how many lives of the enemy she could account for, before she fell down helpless and could not move. She had three shells left. Two of them served their purpose, the third saved her unsullied honor from disgrace.

At last the plunderers reached the square outside the residence of the American Missionaries. Dikran Aryan and a small band of survivors with him, saw them coming. They could hear the din of the devastation all over the city, the screams of tormented women, the cry of helpless children. They could do nothing, but be ready waiting for the advancing enemy.

Aryan divided his comrades, stationing them in such positions that the entire building could be defended. He put three of them in the stable which was situated opposite the main entrance. Three, he put in the kitchen, the side wall of which extended as far as the door. These two positions crossed each other in such a way that anyone coming into the courtyard would be in crossfire. He himself, with the rest of the company, whose number did not exceed ten, went up to the roof and took their stand behind the barricade. While Arusag stood on the balcony, field glasses in her hand, watching the movements of the crowd outside and informing the defenders of their approach.

From the east and west sides, the house was safe. There was no way to enter. On the north there was a small door,

which led to the back yard of the church. This they had already closed with masonry, to make it straight with the wall.

Dikran's last charge to his men was brave and at the same time, pathetic. "This is our last stand against our age old enemy. We have no hope for salvation. The whole city is in ruins. All of our people have been massacred. Our brave comrades have fallen honorably, gun in hand. We did not have a real opportunity until now, to show of what calibre we are made. It is true that sometimes we went out to bring assistance to other positions. But our station so far has escaped from serious attacks. Our turn has come. Tense is the moment. how do you want to die? Like valiant men, fighting? Or, with the mean death of the gallows, hearing the jeers and insults of that savage crowd?"

"No, no!" cried all in unison. "We will fight till the last man has fallen."

"Forward, then to your stations. You have enough ammunition; use it with care. Our vulnerable point is the front entrance. Concentrate your fire on it."

The military authorities were not aware that one of the Armenian positions was still intact. When the bombardment ceased they thought all of them had been either captured or destroyed. The regular soldiers had withdrawn and had given the mob a chance to complete the destruction. The cannons also had been removed from their platforms.

The governor, having all the officials in his office, was congratulating the German officers for their wonderful artillery skill. They were no doubt worthy to receive a decoration for their bravery and splendid marksmanship in demolishing a defenseless city and burying thousands of women and children under the ruins.

Meanwhile, the mob, unaware of any danger, approached the door of the Mission house. They found it closed and fastened from the inside. They thought perhaps it was left from the time when the Armenians were still resisting. They looked for an axe to break it down. The crowd thickened in the square.

Aryan gave the order and a volley from ten guns dropped the same number of Turks. Taken aback, they ran for shelter. A second volley scored another ten. The square was cleared.

The news soon reached the government house. The officials in conclave heard with astonishment. Was it possible

that a shell had not been dropped in the American headquarters? The Turkish praise of the German gunners turned into ridicule. Herr Eckhart, that faithless missionary leaped from his seat and with a quixotic gesture, commanded his servant to bring his horse. "I bombarded that location," he cried. "How does it happen that the American Mission was not hit?"

He came to the church and examined it; and found that although the roof and the dome had fallen, the thick and strong walls had protected the adjoining building. He investigated all the available places and saw it was possible to bombard the house only from the square on the south side. But the streets were so obstructed by debris that it would be impracticable to drag the huge and cumbersome cannon through them.

He then went up the belfrey of the church, the steps of which were still intact, and stood before one of the small windows. He saw a group of men on the roof opposite, watching the square below with concentrated attention. He felt that he had made a new discovery. It was easy from this height to beat down the few survivors. With a feeling of satisfaction, as if he had already triumphed over them, he called out with a loud voice, speaking in Turkish: "You fools, there is no hope for you. Your day of reckoning has arrived. Resistance is useless. Drop your weapons, or you will be annihilated."

Aryan and his comrades, taken by surprise, turned towards the voice and answered with a volley. Not a bullet penetrated the belfrey. The oblique construction of the windows made it impossible to shoot through. Immediately they ran to their refuge behind the barricade for fear of reprisal. The shots, however, were not answered.

Once more the unseen voice spoke, "This is Herr Eckhart speaking, You know me. I will do this for you. I will mediate between you and the government, if you surrender, and save your lives."

Aryan came out of his hiding place and approached the belfrey as near as he could go. Speaking in English, he said: "Herr Eckhart, I never had occasion to meet you during the peace time; but I understand that you are a military man, with the rank of captain in the German army. Do you consider it in conformity with the international laws to bombard a defenseless city, inhabited by thousands of women and children, or to shell the places of worship? We know that the

Turks practice such barbarities. They are used to massacring unarmed populations, but we did not imagine that men who call themselves Christian and civilized would descend to their level."

Hearing these words, Eckhart was infuriated. Once or twice he put his hand to his gun but did not draw it.

"Who are you?" he asked at last. "Are you an Armenian or an American?"

"I am an Armenian and proud of it," replied Dikran.

"How can you lecture me on military laws, being an Armenian? The Armenians are an ungrateful people. I am sorry I have done so much for them."

"You are the ungrateful man," shouted Armen Attarian, the group captain. "How can you talk of gratitude? Do you forget that you betrayed shamelessly those men whom you used to call your friends? Their blood is crying against you from the ground. Was it not you who stood by, coolly watching, when Soghomon Knadjian, in whose house you had been entertained hundreds of times, was arrested without cause and put to death cruelly. You could have saved his life, and the lives of many innocents, by simply raising your hand. Who is ungrateful? You, or the Armenians, who showed you every respect and affection, during all the time you lived among them?"

"In that case, I wash my hands of this affair. Your blood be on your heads," said Eckhart and withdrew.

Dikran realized that the roof was no longer tenable. The enemy could easily destroy their wooden breastwork with the high powered German rifles from the windows of the belfry. Notwithstanding, they were not ready to relinquish their position without a struggle. They were determined to stand behind the defense until the end.

On the street side the square was cleared. The mob, fearing the shots from the roof, dared not approach the door.

A short time later the belfry was filled with Turkish soldiers. An intensive gun fire started. The defenders did not answer. They soon found that the bullets did not reach the barricade. It was out of a direct line from the oblique windows. If anyone dared to put out his hand to shoot straight, a bullet from the Armenians would shatter it.

At last, Eckhart ordered one of the windows to be widened. With their heavy guns they broke down the wall inch

by inch, until a large opening confronted them. When Aryan discovered what they were doing, he told his men to run for shelter. It was already too late. By the time they crossed the roof to reach the stairs, several of them were hit. The survivors took a position in the compound against the entrance.

The square was safe now. The crowd came nearer. Battering the door was the work of a moment. The mob rushed into the courtyard. They were caught between two fires from the stable and from the kitchen. Corpses piled on top of each other. The slaughter was terrific.

Eckhart marveled at the military skill and the resourcefulness of the Armenian commander. He did not believe that he was an Armenian. He wanted to take him alive to ascertain his identity. Turkish officials also were in doubt. They suspected that a disguised English officer was leading the rebellion.

Finally they decided to pull down the wall facing the courtyard. They brought pickaxes and shovels and many willing hands took up the work of destruction. The partition fell down with a crash, accompanied by the shouts of triumph from the crowd. Hundreds of enraged Moslems, calling upon Allah, rushed in fury against a handful of men.

Aryan, standing with his back to the wall opposite, with his few surviving comrades, waited for them. They emptied their guns on the oncoming rabble. The mob halted. The Armenians reloaded their guns quickly. Fortunately the Turks were unarmed. Believing that the fighting was over, they had put away their weapons. Behind the crowd, at a safe distance, the Turkish and German officers with the governor, were watching this Thermopylean battle of modern times.

Once more the rifles barked. The attackers fell back. An officer encouraged them forward. Told them to take the rebels alive.

By this time the Armenians had exhausted their ammunition. When their last shots were discharged, they threw the guns away and drew their daggers.

Then began the last epic struggle. The strong iron arm of Aryan struck right and left with telling effect. He hewed a passage through the crowd. They dispersed like locusts before a whirlwind. Arusag standing on the balcony watched him. She had seen him fight many a time; but she had never witnessed such a sight. She marveled at his immense courage

and prodigious vigor. A mysterious wave of telepathy passed between them. He was aware of her presence. When he had breathing time, he looked up and smiled. Her admiration enveloped his whole body like a warm cloak. With bated breath she said; "Strike, strike, my beloved. I will follow you soon."

"Already at his feet hath sunk
The foremost of the prying band.
A gasping head, a quivering trunk,
Another falls — but round him close
A swarming circle of his foes;
From right to left his path he cleft."

At last the numbers triumphed. One of the officers ordered the crowd to stand aside. Drawing his gun he aimed at the lion-hearted and pressed the trigger. Fell the Armenian hero, taking with him hundreds of lives from the enemy.

Not a single man of that dauntless band of defenders was caught alive.

Only Arusag still lived through the carnage. Holding the revolver in her hand, she turned its muzzle to her heart. Just then the officer who had killed Aryan, saw her and shouted; "Do no harm to yourself. Come down and live and be happy."

"Come and take me," Arusag replied. It occurred to her that there were six bullets in the revolver. One would be enough for herself; why not use the rest on the enemy.

"I swear your life will be spared, if you surrender," again called out the officer.

Arusag was measuring the distance with her eyes. She saw the Mutasarif in the background. She very much desired to take a chance at him, but he stood too far away.

He was indignant at the effrontery of this girl. He gave an order to take her by force. A Turk approached the door to go upstairs. A bullet from the balcony dropped him.

"Five liras for the man who can bring her down alive," he promised.

Half a dozen men rushed to the door. Two of them fell dead before they reached the entrance. Three of them got inside and ran upstairs. One fell at the bed room door. The other two turned back and ran for their lives.

Arusag decided the end had arrived. She raised the gun and in the hearing of all, she cried: "Long live Armenia!" and sent the last bullet through her heart.

END

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